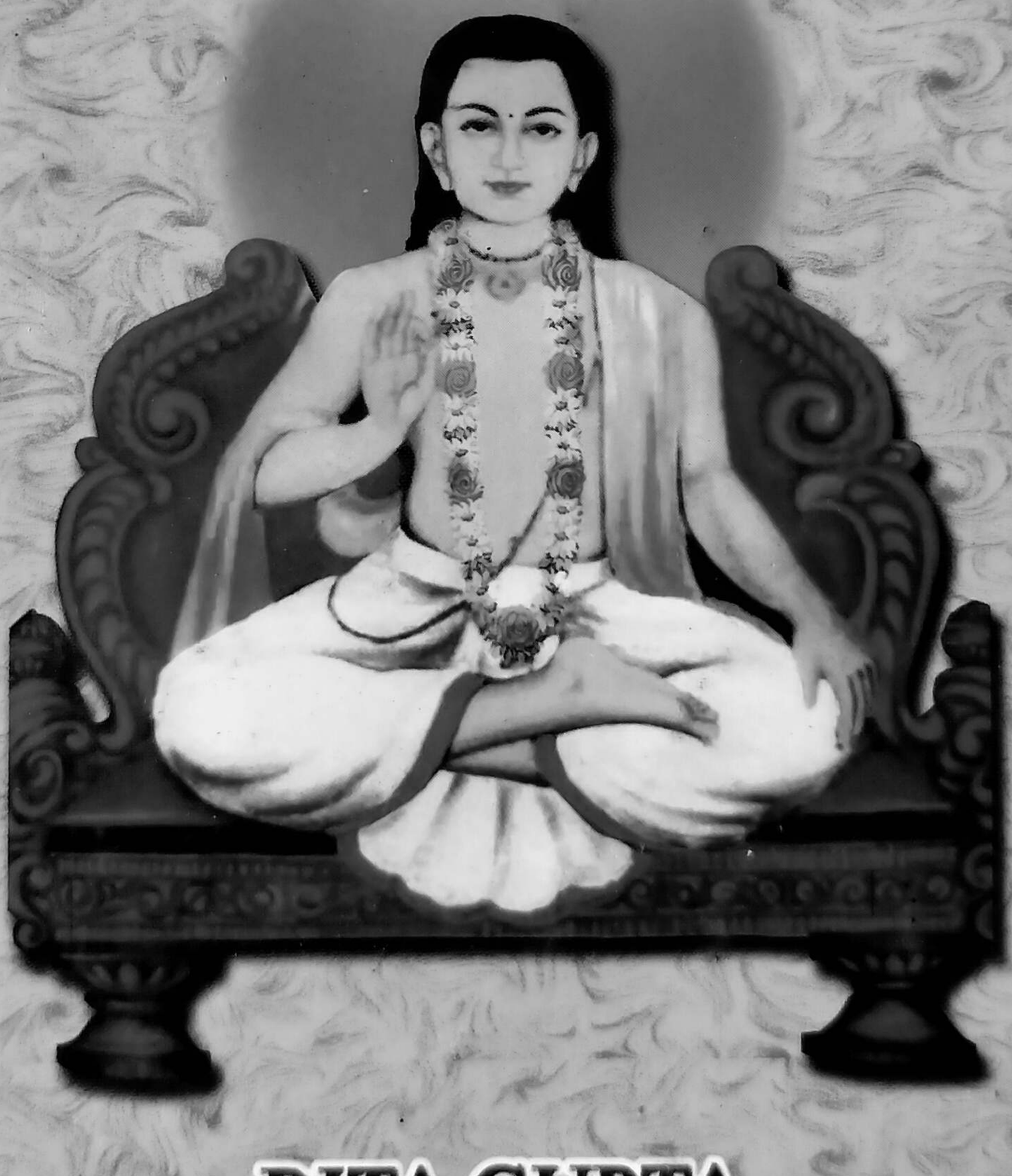
BRAHMAN, INDIVIDUAL SOULS AND THE WORLD IN NIMBĀRKA PHILOSOPHY



RITA GUPTA

Sukchar Kathiababar Ashram
2011

BRAHMAN, INDIVIDUAL SOULS AND THE WORLD IN NIMBARKA PHILOSOPHY

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Publisher's Note

Brahman, Individual Souls, and the World in Nimbarka Philosophy

By **Rita Gupta**

I start this publisher's note by congratulating Ms. Rita Gupta for completing this commendable job of writing a critical analysis and discussion on Brahman Tatwa that is the nature of God, Jeeva that is the nature of life forms, and Jagat Tatwa that is the nature of the universe and their relationship among each other in the context of Dwaita-Adwaitabada or dualism and non-dualism philosophy of Sri Nimbarka Dev.

She aptly points out that the Nimbarka doctrine of Dwaita-Adwaitabada offers an irrefutable perspective to scholars debating about the nature of God and his creations and this universe among themselves. Her thoughts are very well organized and her writing is easy to follow even for readers new to Nimbarka philosophy.

This Book will serve as an invaluable source of knowledge for devotees and scholars interested in Nimbarka philosophy throughout the world. This English version containing the message and philosophy of Nimbarka Dev will circulate throughout India and the world crossing the regional language barriers.

I am certain that the readers will gain much knowledge and wisdom about Nimbarka Philosophy and how it answers the eternal questions about God, life and the universe. I am delighted to get the opportunity to publish this book and to present it to the world.

Dr, Brindaban Bihari Das,
Mohanta Maharaj
Sukchar, Kathia Babar Ashram,
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"Brahman, Individual Souls and the World in Nimbarka Philosophy"

A Reader's Note

Author Rita Gupta is a scholar in her own right. She is erudite and has a deep understanding of Nimbarka Philosophy. She presents Nimbarka philosophy as unique in the sense that it makes a synthesis between Sankaracharya's Advaita Vada that is, Non-Dualism and Ramanuja's Visistadvaitavada, that is qualified non-dualism. Thus, Nimbarka philosophy admits distinctness of three realities e.g. Jiva (Soul). Isvara (God) and Jagat (World) showing a distinction between the independent reality of Purusottama and dependent reality of Jiva and Jagat. It is interesting to note that such a view of reality does not reject Jiva and Jagat as unreal. The sole relation as it appears that Brahman is the cause and Jiva is the effect and as such, Jiva must not ponder the cause of His overall existence so that the Jiva cannot mind to surpass His mighty endeavours as reckoned in the welfare of Nimbarka philosophy.

The author points out the doctrine of Nimbarka that appears to be more close to reality and thus has greater practical value in the sense that its orientation is simultaneously realistic and harmonizing. It accepts the true nature of reality both as having unity as well as diversity. The philosophy accepts the underlying unity for example, clay and clay-pots. There is no doubt that clay-pots are different from the clay with regard to their shape, form and name but they are also non-different with regard to their constituent material. The doctrine takes its stand on the cause-effect or whole-part relation.

The cause-effect relation is neither a relation of pure identity nor that of bare difference from the cause because it has a peculiar nature and many peculiar functions of its own. The clay-jar, for example, is not different from the lump of clay because it is, after all, nothing but clay and depends absolutely on it for its very origin and existence.

In the first chapter of the book the author analytically described Dvaitadvaita theory of Nimbarkacharyaya whereas, the second, third and fourth chapters deal with Brahman, Jiva and Jagat and finally, she critically analyzed Advaita Vedanta concepts of Adhyasa and Ajnana.

Dr, G.R. Srinivasan in his scholarly forwarding note rightly emphasized that Brahman is the cause of the Universe, transforming itself into the world of matter and spirit like a spider which spins its web out of itself, the Brahman splits itself up into innumerable parts of spirit and matter still the Brahman retains its fullness of purity. There is, thus, Bheda and Abheda.

Dr. Srinivasan expressed his disappointment on the ground that Swami Nimbarka is less known in the south since majority of works on Nimbarka's Siddhanta are available only in Bengali language. He, however, suggests Nimbarka philosophy in English would benefit all those interested in the South as well to gain perspective in the Northern School of Vaishnavism. It is worth mentioning that Dr. Brindaban Bihari Das Kathia Baba, Founder President of World Nimbarka Parishad appreciated the valuable suggestion made by Dr. G. R. Srinivasan and already chalked out a programme to publish all major works in English language on Nimbaka's philosophy. The present venture is the publication of **"Brahman, Individual Souls and the World in Nimbarka Philosophy"** authored by Dr. Rita Gupta.

This book provides a thorough yet compact introduction to those who are curious about Nimbarka Philosophy.

-Suchintya Bhattacharya.

6.5.2010

Foreword

I feel immensely delighted to write a foreword to the book **"Brahman, Individual Souls and the World in Nimbarka philosophy"** by Rita Gupta presented in lucid English with copious references and annotations.

Unfortunate, yet true is the fact that Swami Nimbarka and his siddhanta is less known in the south, since majority of works on Nimbarka's siddhanta are available only in the Bengali Language. The author's attempt in publishing this volume namely **"Brahman, Individual soul and the world in Nimbarka Philosophy"** in English is a splendid one which would benefit all those interested in the south as well to gain perspective in the Northern school of Vaisnavism.

The author has clearly shown that Brahman is the cause of the Universe, transforming itself into the world of matter and spirit. Like a spider which spins its web out of itself, the Brahman splits itself up into innumerable parts of spirit and matter. Still the Brahman retains its fullness and purity. This is thus Bheda and Abheda.

Regarding Jiva, the author has pointed out that Jiva is knowledge by nature and states that the atomic Jivas can cognise the various sensations in various parts of the body through all-pervasive knowledge which exists in them as their attribute.

Again, the Acit Jagat is the effect of Brahman and abides in the Brahman. The Jagat which is in the nature of a modification, of the Lord's power of Prakrti is concordant with all the Srutis.

The author has done yeoman service by introducing Swami Nimbarka's siddhanta to the people all over through this scholarly treatise.

West Mombalane
Chennai - 33

Dr. G. R. Srinivasan
Research Scholar,
Hastisa

To
The Sacred Memory
of
Revered Gurudeva Dhananjaydas Kathiababa

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INTRODUCTION

Vedānta philosophy is a common name for the types of philosophy advocated by different schools of thought in India. Śaṃkarācārya's Vedānta philosophy, known as Advaita Vedānta, is the culmination of a certain monistic interpretation of Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa and *Bhagavadgītā*. However, the Vaiṣṇava sects of India interpreted the Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* and *Bhagavadgītā* in a way quite different from that done by Śaṃkarācārya. These interpretations culminate also in different sorts of Vedānta. They are: Dvaitādvaita Vedānta of Nimbārkācārya, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta of Rāmānujācārya, Dvaita Vedānta of Madhvācārya and Śuddhādvaita Vedānta of Vallabhācārya.

All the different Vaiṣṇava schools of Vedānta emphasize that *bhakti* (devotion) is the best means of the direct intuition (*sākṣātkāra*) of Brahman, and consequently, of *mokṣa* (liberation). The Dvaitādvaita school of Nimbārkācārya, accordingly, insists that Brahman, who takes the form of all living beings and the world, but is also beyond all forms, who is beyond the natural qualities, but yet sustains the natural world, can be attained through *bhakti*.

The path that the Nimbārka school recommends for attaining Brahman is known as the path of *bhakti*. Thinking of oneself and *jagat* (world) as forms of Brahman is an essential element of the path of *bhakti*. One who travels along the path of knowledge like the Advaitin, only thinks of himself as identical with Brahman. In his vision the rest of the world is different from Brahman. One who treads the path of *bhakti*, however, thinks that he himself, all the *jīvas* (living beings) and the whole visible *jagat* are identical with Brahman.

The spiritual endeavour of one who treads the path of

bhakti consists of three stages. One of the three stages is marked by the contemplation of the identity of *jagat* with Brahman. The other stage is marked by the contemplation of all *jīvas* (including oneself) as identical with Brahman. The third stage comprises the meditation on Brahman, who is also conceived as being over and above *jīva* and *jagat*, as omniscient, and full of infinite bliss (*ānandamaya*). The first two stages of spiritual contemplation fully purify the mind of the devotee. The third stage is the one by which the devotee attains the direct intuition of Brahman.

According to the Nimbārkist, who follows the path of *bahkti*, Brahman is both *saguṇa* (qualified) and *nirguṇa* (qualityless). *Jīva* and *jagat* are the qualities of Brahman in the form of His powers of *cit* (consciousness) and *ānanda* (bliss). Thus Brahman is *saguṇa*. *Guṇas* (qualities) cannot exist apart from the *guṇavāna* (the substratum of qualities). Hence *jīva* and *jagat* are *abhinna* (non-distinct = identical) with the *guṇavāna*, Brahman. Yet, as the substratum of qualities, Brahman exists over and above the qualities, *jīva* and *jagat*. Hence Brahman is not fully identical with His qualities, *jīva* and *jagat*. In this sense Brahman is *nirguṇa*, beyond the qualities.

Towards the end of his spiritual journey, the devotee realizes both the identity of *jīva* and *jagat* with Brahman, and also the fact that Brahman, in His essence, transcends *jīva* and *jagat*. This realization produces *parābhakti* (supreme devotion). This *parābhakti*, which enables the devotee to see everything as Brahman, leads the devotee towards the *cidānandamaya* highest existence. This realization is possible not through the path of knowledge, but only through that of *bhakti*. And this realization enables the devotee to attain liberation and thereby enjoy limitless happiness and bliss by attaining *ānandamaya-*

Brahman. However, the Nimbārkist contends that proper liberation is possible only when the devotee, who has directly intuited Brahman, enters *brahmaloka* after dissociating himself from his body. This liberation is accordingly called *videhamukti* (disembodied liberation).

The Nimbārkist maintains that even in the state of *videhamukti*, the liberated *jīva* only enjoys similarity with Brahman. He does not become completely identical with Brahman. Even in the state of *videhamukti*, the *jīva* remains different from Brahman in respect of power and knowledge. Although the *videhamukta* individual soul attains many qualities similar to those of Brahman, yet he is incapable of creating, sustaining and dissolving *jīva* and *jagat*. That power of creating, sustaining and dissolving belongs only to Brahman. Although the liberated soul becomes omniscient, yet he is not eternally omniscient like Brahman. He can, through meditation, know any particular object.

Unlike the Advaitin, the Nimbārka-vedāntin does not deny the reality of *jīva*, *jagat* and *īśvara* (God). In his opinion Brahman has four aspects: *akṣara* Brahman, *īśvara*, *jīva* and *jagat*. *Jagat* is the manifestation of Brahman's power of *ānanda*. *Īśvara* is that aspect of Brahman which enjoys the whole of worldly happenings in *jagat* in an infinite variety of ways. He does not see and enjoy the worldly happenings as a succession of events. The whole succession of worldly happenings appears to Him simultaneously. As *jīva*, however, Brahman enjoys the worldly happenings in a discrete way, as a succession of events. *Īśvara*, *jīva* and *jagat* are the three aspects (*vibhāva*) of Brahman. But He who has this *vibhāva*, the *advaita* Brahman, is beyond words and mind, and can only be indicated as *sat* (existent). This *akṣara* Brahman is immersed in the incessant sea of *ānaṅda*, which is His essence. Because *jīva* and *jagat*

are present in *akṣara* Brahman in an unmanifest and uniform form, there is no multiplicity in Him. He is beyond characterization and categorisation (i.e., *nirviśeṣa*). The Nimbārkist insists that Brahman, consisting of four aspects, can be realized only by treading the path of *bhakti*.

Nimbārka religio-philosophical literature, which is a veritable treasure-house of truths, by knowing which one can transcend all suffering and obtain everlasting peace, remains largely unknown to people. People generally think that Vedānta philosophy means only Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. It is high time that people all over the world need to be introduced to the treasure-house of Nimbārka philosophy.

However, there are difficulties of making Nimbārka philosophy known to people all over the world. Original Sanskrit works of Nimbārka philosophy are not accessable to all. Authoritative works on Nimbārka philosophy are available mostly in Bengali. Swami Santadasji has explained the basic elements of Nimbārka philosophy in Bengali in his *Vedantadarshan*, which basically contains a Bengali translation of the commentary by Nimbārkācārya on *Brahmasūtra*. My revered gurudeva, Swami Dhananjaydasji has also written in Bengali, a book entitled, *Srinimbarkacharya, Tanhar Darshanik Matabad O Sadhanpranali*. Both Swami Santadasji and my revered gurudeva have written several other minor treatises on the lives and teachings of Śrinimbārkācārya and his followers. The late Amar Prasad Bhattacharya has enriched our knowledge of Nimbārka philosophy by his book, *Srinimbarka O Dvaitādvaita Darshan*. These books mentioned here enable only those who can read Bengali to know the fundamentals of Nimbārka philosophy. The basic doctrines of Nimbārka philosophy remain unknown to those who do not know Bengali.

Not much has been written on Nimbārka philosophy

even in English. S.N. Das Gupta, in *A History of Indian Philosophy*, has given a very brief account of Nimbārka philosophy. J.N. Sinha, in *History of Indian Philosophy* has written more elaborately on Nimbāraka philosophy. Rama Choudhury's *Doctrines of Nimbārka And His Followers* presents a short but insightful analysis of the basic tenets of Nimbārka philosophy. These texts are, however, not enough for a proper comprehension of Nimbārka philosophy.

If we want that Nimbārka philosophy should have a world-wide publicity, so that people all over the world would be benefitted by the knowledge stored in the treasure-house of Nimbārka philosophy, we have to make the sincere effort to write extensively in *English* on Nimbārka philosophy.

This book, *Brahman, Individual Souls And The World In Nimbārka Philosophy,* is written with the humble attempt to make the basic doctrines of Nimbārka philosophy known to more and more people all over the world. The literature on Nimbārka philosophical and religious doctrines is really quite extensive. It is not possible to present the entire corpus of this extensive literature within the narrow bounds of the present book. Nevertheless, this brief introduction to the main doctrines of Nimbārka philosophy will, hopefully, meet the readers' need to have access to an English book that offers them a basic understanding of Nimbārka philosophy.

Much of the material for writing this book has been collected from *Vedanta Darshan* of Swami Santadasji, *Srinimbārkacharya, Tanhar Darshanik Matabad O Sadhanpranali* of Swami Dhananjaydasji and *Srinimbārka O Dvaitadvaita Darshan* of Amar Prasad Bhattacharya. The present book could not be written without the help of these books.

Sri Sri Brindabanbihari Dasji, Mohanta of Kathia Babar

Ashram, Sukhchar, Kolkata has given me enough encouragement to write this book. I am unable to express my indebtedness to him properly.

Rita Gupta

Chapter- I
THE DVAITĀDVAITA THEORY OF NIMBĀRKĀCĀRYA

The Upaniṣads contain many texts and statements which appear to contradict one another. (1) For example, Brahman is stated to be without qualities (*nirguṇa / nirviśeṣa*) in many texts of the Upaniṣads. Brahman is stated in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* to be neither extensive nor atomic, neither short nor long ("*Asthūlamananaṇvahrasvamadīrgham*". Bṛhad. Up 2:1.2). It is stated in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* to be beyond words, beyond touch, beyond form, beyond destruction ("*Aśabdama-sparśamarūpamavyayam*". Kaṭha. Up. 1.3.15). However, many Upaniṣadic texts describe Brahman to be qualified (*saguṇa*). It is said to be truth, knowledge, infinity ("*Satyaṃ jnānamanantaṃ brahma*". Tait. Up. 2.1) and bliss ("*Ānando brahma*". Tait. Up 3.6). The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* describes Brahman to be the cause of the creation, maintenance and dissolution of all things and beings of the world.("*Yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvanti yat prayāntyabhisaṃviśanti tat vijiñāsasva tad brahma*". Tait. Up. 3). Being the creator, sustainer etc. of the world, Brahman is an omniscient and omnipotent being.

(2) Many Upaniṣadic texts maintain the difference between Brahman, the individual souls (*jīvas*) and the world (*jagat*). For example, the *Śvetaśvatara Upaniṣad* speaks of the difference between Brahman and individual souls (*jīvas*). Brahman is omniscient and the individual soul has limited knowledge. Brahman is the ruler and the individual soul is the ruled one. Both Brahman and the individual soul are unborn and eternal. ("*Jñājñau dvāvajāvīśānīśau*" Švet. Up. 1.9). The same difference is also spoken of in that Upaniṣad as: "Two friendly birds are perched on the same tree. One of them (*jīva*)

relishes the delicious fruit, the other one (Brahman) just witnesses the other doing so. (Śvet. Up. 4.6).[1] *Yajuḥ Āraṇyaka* 2.11 describes Brahman as the controller of individual souls by entering into their minds ("*Antaḥpraviṣṭāḥ śāstā janānāṃ*"). However, such Upaniṣadic statements like, (i) Thou art that ("*Tattvamasi*", Chānd. Up. 6.8.7), (ii) This *ātman* is Brahman ("*Ayamātmā brahma*", Bṛhad. Up. 4.4.5), (iii) I am Brahman ("*Aham brahmāsmi*", Bṛhad. Up. 1.4.10), (iv) I am He ("*So'hamasmi*") are keen on showing the identity of Brahman and the individual soul (*jīva*).

Whereas the Taittirīya Upaniṣadic text like, "*Yato vā imāni bhutāni jāyante*" . . . (That from which these beings are created . . .) show the difference between Brahman, the creator, from the created beings, texts like, "*Sarvaṃ khalvidaṃ brahma*", Chānd. Up. 3.14.1, (All this is Brahman), seem to emphasize the identity between Brahman and all created beings and objects.

Nimbārkācārya contends that since all the Upaniṣadic texts have the same strength, all must be acknowledged to be true; and none should be treated as primary (*mukhya*) or as secondary (*gauṇa*) in meaning. Accordingly, he tries to reconcile the apparently contradictory statements, by pointing out that they are all true, when interpreted properly. Brahman is both without qualities (*nirguṇa*) and qualified (*saguṇa*). He is both dual (*dvaita* = as created beings are His natural parts), and non-dual (*advaita* = as a whole He is over and above the parts.). Hence, his view is known as *dvaitādvaitavāda*. Brahman is both different (*bhinna*) and non-different (*abhinna* = identical) from the created beings. Accordingly, his view is known as *bhinnābhinnavāda*. His theory of *dvaitādvaitavāda* or *bhinnābhinnavāda* is thus an excellent reconciliatory work harmonising the apparently contradictory views often found in the Upaniṣads.

Brahman Is Both *Nirguṇa* (Attributeless) *And Saguṇa* (Qualified)

Nimbārkācārya lays emphasis on the qualified (*saguṇa*) aspect of Brahman. He urges that Brahman, who is *sat* (existence), *cit* (consciousness) and *ānanda* (bliss = delight), has created the world consisting of a variety of names and forms. He is also responsible for its maintenance and dissolution. He is the identical efficient and material cause of the world. It is to be understood here that Brahman is really said to be the identical efficient and material cause of the *entire universe*.

In this way Brahman is omniscient and omnipotent. He controls and pervades the entire world consisting of a variety of living and non-living beings and things. Brahman, qualified by these qualities, is thus known as God (*īśvara*).

Nimbārkācārya points out that Brahman is the repository of infinite auspicious qualifies (*kalyāṇa-guṇa*). In his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* he states: the word 'Brahman' refers to *puruṣottama* (God = Nārāyaṇa), the beloved of Ramā. He is the greatest by virtue of His infinite, unthinkable natural qualities and powers.[2] In his commentary on Brahmasūtra, 1.2 (*"Janmādyasya yataḥ"* = That from which there is birth etc.) he states: the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the world is by an omniscient and infinitely qualified God, who controls even Brahmā, Śiva and time. He is evidently Brahman.[3]

It is true that in some contexts the Upaniṣads describe Brahman as attributeless (*nirguṇa*). According to Nimbārka philosophy, the term '*nirguṇa*' is to be understood in these contexts either as signifying that Brahman is devoid of natural despicable attributes (*prākṛta-heyaguṇa*), or as signifying that the attributes of Brahman are not limited to any specific quality, to any specific degree (*iyattāniṣedhapara*).[4]

The Upaniṣadic texts pointing out either the qualified or the unqualified nature of Brahman can be harmonized in Nimbārka philosophy in the following way:

The world and the individual *jīvas* are respectively the revelations (projections) of two inherent powers of Brahman, namely, *ānanda* (bliss) and *cit* (consciousness). These powers (*śakti*) are referred to as qualities (*guṇa*) of Brahman. Brahman can, in this sense, be said to be qualified (*saguṇa*). As already stated, Brahman is the identical efficient and material cause (*abhinnanimittopādānā-kāraṇa*) of the world. According to this view, the world is not a real transformation of the essence of Brahman (*svarūpapariṇāma*). The world is only an effect of the revelation (projection) of Brahman's power (*śaktivikṣepa-rūpa-pariṇāma*). It is in this specific sense that Brahman is said to be the material cause of the world. He is the material cause in the sense that He expresses His natural subtle powers of *cit* and *ānanda* in manifest forms, and these expressed gross forms are known as the world of multiplicity.[5]

Brahman is also stated by Nimbārkācārya to be the efficient cause (*nimitta-kāraṇa*) of the world of living beings in the following sense:

The knowledge of the bound ignorant individual soul is in a shrunken state in bondage. Brahman adds particular bodies to these souls so that they can, through these bodies, enjoy or suffer the results of the acts of previous lives.[6] Brahman is the instrumental cause of the world inasmuch as He is instrumental in connecting three things: the individual souls, their bodies and the results of their past actions.

Inasmuch as the world and the individual souls are the manifest forms of the subtle powers of Brahman, they are spoken of in Nimbārka philosophy as His parts. They are not, as the Advaitin urges, illusory false appearances of the real

Brahman. Just as the spider creates the web out of itself, but is not transformed into it, in the same way, although Brahman creates the world and the individual beings, He Himself remains, essentially untransformed, unchanged. Just as the tortoise, having spread its limbs out of its shell, again withdraws them within its own shell, in the same way, Brahman at one time manifests this world and the living beings out of His subtle form and later on withdraws them in His own unmanifest essence.[7]

The individuality of the individual *jīvas* is not, as the Advaitin urges, falsely imagined. The individual *jīvas* are as real as Brahman. The individuality of the *jīva* is not destroyed even in liberation (*mokṣa*). On the contrary, the individual attains true knowledge of his own self and he enjoys bliss. By infinitely expanding His quality or power of *cit*, Brahman has entered separately into each part of the world, from the biggest to the smallest part. His consciousness (*cit*) dwelling separately in these parts is known as individual souls (*jīvas*).[8]

In this way the world and individual souls have been conceived in Nimbārka philosophy to be qualities or powers of Brahman. Qualities or powers of Brahman are also in a secondary sense conceived by Nimbārkācārya to be parts (*aṃśa*) of Brahman. They are not parts like the individual parts of a pitcher. The reason is, Brahman is said to be indivisible (*akhaṇda*) in the Upaniṣads. Brahman has, in this sense, been viewed as a whole (*aṃśī*) consisting of parts.[9] Aṣ parts the world and individual souls are inherently dependent on Brahman, the whole. As dependent existents, they cannot be conceived apart from Brahman, and in this sense they are non-different (*abhinna*) from Brahman.

As a substratum of parts, Brahman is also different from the parts. A whole is not exhausted in the parts. It exists over

and above them. In the same way Brahman, the qualified one (*guṇī*), the substratum of power (*śaktimāna*) has existence over and above His qualities, His powers, the world and individual beings. This existence of Brahman as over and above the world and living beings is figuratively spoken of as His existence as attributeless (*nirguṇa*, *guṇātīta*) Brahman. Brahman is attributeless also in the sense that in the state before creation, *cit* (consciousness) and *ānanda* (bliss), powers and attributes of Brahman, remain in a dormant and subtle form in Brahman. Brahman is not attributeless in the sense that these attributes or powers are absolutely non-existent in that state. However, the attributes or powers are not expressly manifested in the form of a created world at the time before creation [i.e. in the state of *pralaya*,[10] (dissolution)].

Brahman Is Both Different And non-different From The World And Individual Souls

Since Brahman, as stated above, is the material cause (*upādāna-kāraṇa*) of the world, it is evident that the world, the effect, is not completely different from its material cause. At the same time, Brahman, which is over and above the world, controls the world and living beings. Hence, as a controller, Brahman is different from the world and individual beings. Thus, the relation between Brahman and the world and individual souls is one of *bhedābheda* (difference-cum-non-difference) / *dvaitādvaita* (dualism-cum-non-dualism). As a self-existent entity Brahman is *advaita*, non-dual. [This *advaita* Brahman is, as self-existent, different (*bhinna*) from *jīva* and *jagat*, who lack independent existence.] Yet Brahman is also *dvaita*, dual, inasmuch as *jīva* and *jagat* are His real natural

parts. However, as parts of Brahman, *jīva* and *jagat* are non-different (*abhinna*) from Him. The *bhedābheda* relation is said to be a *svābhāvika* (natural) one, and not due to any adventitious factor. It must be noted here that the adjectives, *bhinna* and *abhinna* are contradictory in some cases. Yet they are not contradictory in the context of the relation between Brahman and *jīva-jagat*,[11] as Brahman is the whole (*aṃśī*) and the latter are Its parts (*aṃśa*). It has already been analysed above that the whole is different from the parts and, at the same time, the parts are non-different from the whole.[12]

In his commentary on Brahmasūtra 2.1.13 Nimbārkācārya answers an objection of an opponent. The objection is to the effect that, if Brahman is the material cause of the world, then it has to be granted that Brahman, who is identical with the *jīva*, is Himself subject to happiness and suffering due to past actions, like the *jīva*. And the distinction between one (i.e. *jīva*) who enjoys or suffers the consequences of past actions, and one who is the controller of *jīvas*, as mentioned in the Vedas, becomes irrelevant. In answer to such an objection it is said that, just as the sea and its waves, the sun and its light, are different as well as non-different, in the same way the enjoyer / sufferer *jīva* and his controller, Brahman, are different in spite of being nơn-different.[13] (See Ved. pār. saurabha, commentary on 2.3.13).

Nimbārkācārya answers another objection regarding the identity of Brahman and the *jīvas*. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* states, 'this self is Brahman'. However, since *jīva* is Brahman, and Brahman is the cause of the world, it would follow that by creating the world full of suffering, Brahman Himself brings suffering unto Himself. It transpires that instead of doing good to Himself, Brahman harms Himself; He inflicts evil (*ahita*) upon Himself.[14] Nimbārkācārya says that the objection is unfounded. Brahman is the controller of *jīvas*. It is

evident from the Upaniṣadic assertion, "*Ya ātmani tiṣṭhanātmānamantaro yamayati*". (He controls the *jīva* from within. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 14.5.30). Accordingly, Brahman is different from the controlled *jīvas*. The objection that Brahman harms Himself is unfounded, inasmuch as He is greater than the *jīvas*.[15] Thunderbolt and *vaiduryamaṇi* (a particular black gem) are different from the earth, in spite of the fact that they are transformations of earth. In the same way, *jīvas* in different names and forms, are different from Brahman in spite of their being non-different from Brahman. Hence, the defect pointed out earlier is baseless.[16]

The Basis Of *Bhedābheda /Dvaitādvaita* Theory In Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra*, *Gītā* and *Purāṇa*.

It is evident from the above discussion that the Upaniṣads hold the relation of Brahman to *jīvas* to be one of *bhedābheda /dvaitādvaita*. Nimbarkācārya shows that in one Brahmasūtra the relation of *bhedābheda* has been clearly pointed out. The *sūtra* runs as follows:

"*Aṃśo nānāvyapadeśādanyathā cāpi*
dāśakitavāditvamadhīyata eke". B.S.2.3.42.

Nimbārkācārya observes that in this Brahmasūtra the author points out the difference between Brahman, the whole, and *jīvas*, His parts, basing himself on the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*'s saying, "God is omniscient and *jīva* has limited knowledge. They are both unborn and eternal". ("*Jñājñau dvāvajāvīśāniśau*". Švet. Up. 1.9.) It is also implied in this *sūtra* that though *jīva* is a part of Brahman, yet it is also identical with the latter, as is evident from the Chāndogya Upaniṣadic comment, "*Tattvamasi*" (Chānd. Up. 6.8.7). Nimbārkācārya adds, the *Atharva Veda* maintains that even the lower class

kaivarttas, the servants and even people who cheat others in gambling are all Brahman. Thus it is clear that the relation between Brahman and *jīva* is that of *bhedābheda*.[17]

Nimbārkācārya points out that in the next two *sūtras* (*sūtras* 2.3.43 and 44) the relation of *bhedābheda* between Brahman and *jīva* has been suggested.

Sūtra 2.3.43[18] states that the Upaniṣadic statement, 'this world and the living beings constitute only a part (*pāda*) of Brahman',[19] points out that being a part of Brahman, *jīva* is non-different from Brahman, the whole.

Even *sūtra* 2.3.44,[20] Nimbārkācārya points out, shows, that on the basis of the *Gītā's* statement, "my eternal part is known as *jīva* in this world",[21] it can be said that *jīvas* are, as parts, non-different from Brahman.

The author of *Brahmasūtra*, Nimbārkācārya urges, has taken both the Upaniṣadic statements showing the difference between Brahman and *jīva*, and those showing non-difference of the two, to be true. A part cannot exist apart from its dependence on the whole. Hence a part is integrally and inseparably related to the whole. In this way a part is non-different from the whole. Yet, as a pervader (*vyāpaka*), a whole has a wider existence than that of its parts which are pervaded (*vyāpya*) by it. In this way a whole is different from its parts. The power (*śakti*) and quality (*guṇa*) of Brahman are, in a sense, His parts. And as parts they cannot exist independently of the whole, the substratum of power (*śaktimāna*) and the qualified (*guṇavāna*). Hence they are non-different from the substratum of power, the qualified one. However, the substratum of power, the qualified one, being the locus of power and quality, is over and above the power and quality. Accordingly, the relation between the *jīvas* and Brahman is one of *bhedābheda*.

Let us now proceed to show how Nimbārkācārya demonstrates that the relation between the world and Brahman is one of *bhedābheda* on the basis of the Upaniṣadic statements and the *Brahmasūtra*.

Commenting on Brahmasūtra 2.1.14,[22] Nimbārkācārya writes, "the effect is non-different from the cause. This follows from the *Chāndogya* sayings like 'the clay alone is true, its transformations like the pots and plates are different from it due to different names', 'the whole world is identical with Brahman'[23]; 'thou art that'[24]."[25]

In the above *sūtra* it has been shown that as an effect, the world is non-different from its material cause, Brahman. Nimbārkācārya points out that in the Brahmasūtras[26] 2.1.16-19 also, the same non-difference of the world from its material cause, has been pointed out.

Brahmasūtra 1.1.2, " *Janmādyasya yataḥ*" (that from which birth etc. take place) however, Nimbārkācārya contends, points out the difference of the world from Brahman. That the relation between the world and Brahman is one of *bhedābheda*, Nimbārkācārya says, is clearly pointed out in the B.S. 3.2.27, "*Ubhayavyapadeśāttvāhikuṇḍalvat*" (Both views have been maintained, as in the case of the serpent and its coil). The world, both in its gross / manifest (*mūrta = sthūla*) form and its subtle / unmanifest (*amūrta = sūkṣma*) form is related to Brahman, its material cause, as being both different and non-different from it. Just as the parts of a serpent, like its tail and hood, remain in an unmanifest form when it is coiled; and when the serpent spreads itself, its parts become manifest, in the same way the world remains in an unmanifest form in Brahman at the state of dissolution (*pralaya*), and assumes its manifest form in the state of creation.[27]

Since the Upaniṣads contain statements pointing out

both difference and non-difference between Brahman and *jīva-jagat*, the relation between the two has, accordingly, been regarded by the author of *Brahmasūtra*, claims Nimbārkācārya, to be that of *bhedābheda*. Nimbārkācārya shows the following Upaniṣadic statements and Brahmasūtras as emphasizing the difference of *jīva* from Brahman:

(i) "*Jñānjñau dvāvajāvīśanīśau*". (Śvet. Up. 1.19); (ii) "*Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā*", (Mund. Up. 3.1.1); (iii) "*Nityo nityānāṃ cetanaścetanānāṃ*". (He is the eternal of the eternals, conscious of the conscious beings. Kaṭha. Up. 2.2.13); (iv) "*Bheda-vyapadeśācca*". (*Jīva* is different as preached by the Upaniṣads. B.S. 1.1.18); (v) "*Adhikaṃ tu bhedanirdeśāt*". (Brahman is greater, as the difference between Him and *jīva* is indicated in the Upaniṣads. B.S. 2.1.21)

The following texts emphasize the non-difference of *jivas* from Brahman:

(i) "*Ahaṃ brahmāsmi*". (I am Brahman. Bṛhad. Up. 1.4.10); (ii) "*Ayamātmā brahma*". (This self is Brahman. Bṛhad. Up. 4.4.5); (iii) "*Tattvamasi*". Chānd. Up. 6.8.7).

The following Upaniṣadic texts and Brahmasūtras emphasize the difference between the world and Brahman:

(i) "*Yato vā imāni bhutāni jāyante*"; (ii) "*Janmādyasya yataḥ*"; (iii) "*Tadabhidhyānāttu talliṅgāt saḥ*"; [28] (iv) "*Viparyayeṇa tu kramo'ta upapadyate.*"[29]

The following Upaniṣadic statements emphasize the non-difference of the world from Brahman:

(i) "*Sarvaṃ khalvidaṃ brahma*". Chānd. Up. 3. 14. 1; (ii) "*Aitādātmyamidaṃ sarvam*"[30]. Chānd. Up. 6. 8.7; (iii) "*Tadananyatvamārambhanaśbdādibhyaḥ.*"[31] B.S. 2.1.14.

It has been shown above that, according to

Nimbārkācārya, the world is not an imaginary false construction. Brahman manifests Himself as this world. (Hence, this world is non-different from Brahman.) This view of Nimbārkācārya is confirmed by various statements of Upaniṣads, the *Gītā* and other Smṛtis like *Śrīmadbhāgavata* and *Viṣṇupurāṇa*. We quote below some of them:

The *Chāndaga Upaniṣad* states: (i) "*Sadeva saumyedamagra āsīdekamevādvitīyam, tadaikṣata vahusyāṃ prajāyeya*,[32] (ii) "*Sarvaṃ khalvidaṃ brahma.*"[33] *The Taittirīya Upaniṣad* states: "*Tadātmānaṃ svayamakuruta*".[34]

In the *Gītā* Śrikṛṣṇa tells Arjuna: (i) "I am immoral, I am death. All that is gross and subtle, motionless and moving, are me;"[35] (ii) "No immobile and mobile being can exist without me";[36] (iii) "Brahman is the exterior and interior of all beings; the moving and unmoving are all Brahman."[37]

The following *śloka* of *Śrīmadbhāgavata* points out the identity of Brahman and the world:

"*Ahmevāsamevāgre nānyad yat sadasatparam /*
Paścādahaṃ yadetacca yo'vaśiṣyate so'smyaham" //

"I alone existed before (creation). Nothing, whether gross or subtle as their cause, existed apart from me. Even after (creation) I am existing. This world is also me. What will remain at *pralaya* is nothing but me." (*Śrīmadbhāgavata*, 2.9.32)

Śrīmadbhāgavata also states it clearly that those who really know God, know that the whole world is the manifestation of God; nothing in this world is other than Him:

"*Vastuto jānatāmatra kṛṣṇaṃ sthāṣṇu cariṣṇu ca /*
Bhagavadrūpamakhilaṃ nānyadvastviha kiñcana" //

Śrīmadbhāgavata, 10.14.56

Visṇupurāṇa states the identity of the world and Brahman. It says: " *Devas* (deities), men, beasts, birds, trees and reptiles are all forms of Viṣṇu — knowing this, one should view the world of moving and unmovable beings as identical with the self, inasmuch as Viṣṇu assumes the form of the entire universe."[38]

A question arises at this stage. From the Chāndogya Upaniṣadic statement, "*Sadeva saumyedamgra āsīdekamevādvitīyam*", it transpires that that the world and living beings did not exist before creation. Later on, Brahman created the world and living beings. How can the *jīva* and *jagat* be then considered to be ultimately real? Moreover, how can a created being be eternal? How can eternal Brahman then be identical with the non-eternal world of living and non-living beings? In answer it is pointed out that the *Chāndogya* statement quoted here does not imply the non-existence of the world and living beings before creation. The *jīva* and the world existed in unmanifested forms in Brahman before creation, just as the tree exists in an unmanifested form in the seed. Brahman only expressly manifests them from Himself by willing, "I shall be many". Because the tree lives in a latent form in the seed, it can be born, be expressed in a manifest form from the seed. (It could not do so if it were not already present in the seed.) In the same way, the latent world and living beings expressly manifest themselves from Brahman, their material cause, and are known as being created.

In expressing anything through language we use *words denoting time*. The creation of Brahman has, accordingly, to be expressed in words *denoting time*. One has thus to express creation as a temporal process. Actually, creation implies manifestation of the unmanifest. Otherwise, if the world is supposed to be created at a certain *point in time*, then the view

expressed in the scripture and allied texts regarding creation *being an eternal process* becomes contradicted.

When a person sleeps, his powers of seeing, hearing etc. become submerged in the self. And when he wakes up, his powers of seeing, hearing etc. start functioning again. Similarly, Brahman's powers of consciousness and bliss, the revealed forms of which are known as the living beings and the world, remain dormant in the state of *pralaya*, and at the time of creation the powers become active. The same idea is expressed in the following *śloka* of the *Gītā*:

"*Bhūtagrāmaḥ sa evāyaṃ bhūtvā bhūtvā pralīyate /*
Rāṭryāgame 'vaśaḥ pārtha prabhavatyaharāgame" //

Gītā, 8.19

(O Pārtha, the dependent things of nature, being created again and again, become submerged in Brahman at the nightfall of Brahman, and are again created when the day breaks for Brahman.) The 'nightfall' and 'daybreak' of Brahman is to be understood here as His day of *parlaya* and creation.

Thus the world and living beings, which existed in unmanifested forms in Brahman before creation, express themselves manifestly at creation. Yet, Brahman does not undergo any modification by the process of creation. The point has been succinctly expressed by Swāmi Santadas in his *Vedantadarshan*. He says that from the same piece of stone a sculptor can curve out different images of Kālī, Dūrga, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Śiva, Gopāla. Before these images are curved out of it, they remain identical with it as its immanent forms. By the act of sculpting, those immanent forms do not undergo any change. Only those parts of the stone which created obstruction for the manifestation of the immanent forms, are removed by the chisel.

Thus the images remain identical with the stone before and after the specific manifestations of those forms. In this example, he who observes the process of sculpting is different from the piece of stone. But if we suppose that the stone itself has the power of observing the sculpting, then the stone itself can observe itself in manifold forms, without undergoing any substantial transformation (*vikāra*). The Upaniṣads say — Brahman Himself is the observer (*draṣṭā*). He has the power of judging / observing (*īkṣaṇa*). At the same time He is of the form of the observed created manifold. Thus Brahman can be understood to observe Himself in infinite forms without undergoing any transformation (*vikāra*)[39]

In answer to the objection that difference (*bheda*) and non-difference (*abheda*) are contradictory, we have shown that they are not so in the case of Brahman, the whole, and *jīva* and *jagat*, the parts. The branch is non-different (*abhinna*) from the tree. Yet the tree is of greater extension than the branches; hence it is also different from the branch. Accordingly, the relation between Brahman and its parts like *jīva* and *jagat* is, as Nimbārkācārya conceives it, one of *bhedābheda*, *dvaitādvaita*.

Dvaitādvaita Theory Alone can Harmonise Contradictory Statements

The *Dvaitādvaita* theory alone is capable of harmonizing the apparently contradictory statements in the *śāstras* (scriptures and allied literature). Other contending theories try to harmonise them, but at a cost of unnatural interpretations. They have to stretch their imagination a lot, unnecessarily, but without success.

The *bhedābheda* theory of Nimbārkācārya helps us to harmonise many apparently contradictory statements in the

Upaniṣads and the *Gītā*. We quote below some examples of apparently contradictory statements.

"*Āsīno dūraṃ vrajati śayāno yāti sarvataḥ /*
Kastaṃ madāmadaṃ devaṃ madanyo jñātumarhati" //
Kaṭha. Up. 1.2.21.

[Who else but me is able to know the delighted and undelighted (*madāmadam*) deity; who, although fixed in one place, yet travels far, who although lying down, yet reaches everywhere?]

"*Anejadekaṃ manaso javīyo /*
Nainaddevā āpnuvan pūrvamarṣat"//
"*Taddhāvato 'nyānatyeti tiṣṭhat /*
Tasminnapo mātariśvā dadhāti //
Īśa. Up. 4

"*Tadejati tannaijati taddūre tadvantike /*
Tadantarasya sarvasya tadu sarvasyāsya bāhyataḥ //
Īśa. Up. 5

(Although God is one and immovable, He is faster than the mind. He goes ahead, the senses cannot get hold of Him. Although He is static, yet He overtakes everything. The vital wind always worships that static God. He moves, yet He does not move. He is far, yet He is near. He is within all, yet He is outside of all.)

The apparently contradictory statements in the *Gītā* are the following:

"*Mayā tatamidaṃ sarvaṃ jagadavyaktamūrtinā /*
Matsthāni sarvabhūtāni na cāhaṃ teṣvasthitaḥ //
Gītā, 9.4.

(The whole world is pervaded by the unmanifested form of mine. All the mobile and immobile beings are in me. But I do not exist in them.)

"*Na ca matsthitāni bhūtāni paśya me yogamaiśvaram /*
Bhūtabhṛnna ca bhūtastho mamātmā bhūtabhāvanaḥ //

Gitā, 9.5.

[See my divine state: the beings (although existing in me) do not exist in me, I am sustaining and rearing up the beings. But I do not exist in the beings.]

Yo māṃ paśyati sarvatra sarvañca mayi paśyati /
Tasyāhaṃ na praṇaśyāmi sa ca me na praṇaśyati //

Gītā, 6.30.

(I never remain invisible to him who sees me in everything, and everything in me. He never goes out of my sight.)

"*Sarvabhūtasthitaṃ yo māṃ bhajatyekatvamāsthitaḥ /*
Sarvathā vartamāno'pi sa yogi mayi vartate //

Gītā, 6.31.

(The yogin who worships me in all beings with the idea of being non-different from me, resides in me in all states.)

The contradictory statements quoted above can be shown to be reconciled only in the theory of *bhedābheda*.

There is difference of the effect from the efficient cause. The pot is different from the potter. However, the effect in non-different from its material cause. The pot is non-different from its material cause, the clay. Since Brahman is both the efficient and material cause of the world and living beings, He is both different and non-different (*bhinnābhinna*) from them.

The Difference Between Nimbārka *Bhedābhedavāda* And Other *Bhedābheda* Theories

I

Difference From *Acintyabhedābhedavāda*

Śrī Nimbārkācārya's *bhedābhedavāda,* although similar to that propounded by Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava sect, is yet a little different from it.

Like Nimbārkācārya (see pp. 34, 38), Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, in his *Govinda-bhāṣya,* states Brahman to be the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world. He is both qualified and attributeless. He is omniscient, substratum of all, the repository of infinite blessed qualities (see pp. 38-43), devoid of natural despicable qualities (*prākṛtaheyaguṇa*), and the efficient and material cause of the world.[40] Like Nimbārkācārya he regards Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa as Brahman. Like Nimbārkācārya (pp. 110-11) he describes the *jīvās* as both of the nature of knowledge (*jñāna*) and knower (*jñātā)*, eternal, enjoyer, atomic in magnitude, and dependent on Brahman. In his opinion also, *jīvas*, being parts and powers[41] of Brahman, are both different from and identical with Brahman. (For Nimbārka view see pp. 121-28 Like Nimbārkācārya (see pp. 143f) Śrī Baladeva also maintains that even at liberation, *jīva* does not become identical with Brahman.[42]

The difference as well as non-difference between Brahman and *jīva* and *jagat* are evident in *Govindabhāṣya*. The difference is evident as *jīva* is connected with nescience (*avidyā*), merit and demerit (*pāpa* and *puṇya*) and enjoyment of pleasure and suffering of pain. Yet, Brahman is without nescience, merit, demerit, enjoyment and suffering. Brahman is the regulator and *jīva* and *jagat* are regulated by Him (see

pp. 6 - 7.). Brahman is the creator and sustainer of *jīva* and *jagat*, and the latter are created and sustained by Him.[43]

Since the Upaniṣads and *Brahmasūtra* both affirm Brahman to be the material cause of *jīva* and *jagat*, and since the identity of the effect with the material cause follows by reasoning, effects of Brahman are identical with Brahman.

Accòrding to Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, the attributes of Brahman are completely identical with Brahman. In Nimbārkācārya's opinion, however, there is internal difference (*svagatabheda*) between Brahman and His attributes. Śrī Valadeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa does not recognize such an internal difference.[44]

Moreover, according to Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, the reason for the identity and difference between Brahman and *jīva* and *jagat* cannot be ascertained by the human reason. However, such identity and difference between them is undeniable as the Upaniṣads confirm them. What is undeniable and yet not ascertained by reason is said to *be acintyajñāna-gocara* (object of unthinkable knowledge). Hence although *bheda* and *abheda* are contradictory, yet they co-exist in Brahman due to the unthinkable infinite power of Brahman. How the one Brahman becomes many is beyond our rational thinking. This is the reason why Śri Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa's theory of *bhedābheda* is known as *acintyabhedābhedavāda*.[45] Nimbārkācārya's *bhedābhedavāda* is known as *svābhāvikabhedābhedavāda*. *Bhedābheda* relation, according to Nimbārkācārya, is a natural relation. It is due to the essential (*svābhāvika*) nature of Brahman, the cause, and *jīva* and *jagat*, the effects, as well as Brahman, the whole, and *jīva* and *jagat*, the parts.

We have already demonstrated that the relation between a whole and its parts, the substratum of power and his power,

is naturally one of difference-cum-identity. Like the sun and its light, the sea and its waves and foam, fire and its sparks, the substratum of power and his power, there is a natural relation of *bhedābheda* between Brahman and *jīva* and *jagat*. *Jīva* and *jagat* are the revelations of the powers of Brahman. As powers *jīva* and *jagat* do not have any existence independent of Brahman. Yet, Brahman, the substratum of power, is not exhausted in His specific powers. He exists over and above them.

II

Difference From *Aupādhika-bhedābhedavāda*

Like Nimbārkācārya, Bhāskarācārya is also an upholder of *bhedābhedavāda*. Yet there is some difference between the two theories of *bhedābheda*. Bhāskarācārya also regards Brahman as omniscient, omnipotent, possessor of infinite unthinkable attributes. However, Bhāskarācārya does not regard Brahman as Śrīkṛṣṇa.

Bhāskarācārya regards two forms of Brahman: (i) *kāraṇarūpa* (the form of the cause) and (ii) *kāryarūpa* (the form of the effect, consisting of *jīva* and *jagat*). In *kāraṇarūpa* Brahman is one, but in *kāryarūpa* He is many, just as gold is one, but in the form of ornaments like earring, necklace, it is many.[46] Accordingly, Brahman is of the form of *bhinnābhinna* (difference-cum-identity).[47] Bhāskarācārya maintains that the *kāraṇarūpa* of Brahman is true and natural. But His manifold *kāryarūpa* is due to conditions (*upādhi*). Hence this *kāryarūpa* is adventitious; yet it is true.[48] In His essence He is without difference, form and attributes. He is one without a second, pure and of the form of the cause. Later on, due to *upādhis* (conditions), He becomes qualified, possessed of a form (*sāvayava*) and manifested. So the manifoldness of Brahman is due to *upādhis* (conditions).[49]

According to Nimbārkācārya's *bhedābhedavāda*, although Brahman, as shown above, is in a sense attributeless (i.e. beyond attributes = *guṇātīta*), yet, even in His *kāraṇarūpa*, Brahman is not totally attributeless. In His *kāraṇarūpa*, His attributes or powers of consciousness and bliss are present in latent forms in Him. In Brahman's *kāraṇarūpa* there is internal difference (*svagatabheda*) between Brahman and His qualities or powers. Although in the state of *pralaya*, *jīva* and *jagat* lie submerged in Him, yet there is still in that state some difference between Brahman and His qualities or powers, which remain in latent forms in Brahman. Even when the *jīva* attains liberation, he is not completely identical with Brahman. Bhāskarācārya is, however, of the opinion that *jīva* and *jagat* become submerged with Brahman in the *kāraṇarūpa*. They lose their separate existence completely in the *kāraṇarūpa* of Brahman, and become fully identical with Him.

From the above discussion it transpires that Bhāskarācārya's theory is *aupādhika-bhedābheda-vāda*. According to Bhāskarācārya, the *kāryarūpa* of Brahman is due to *upādhis*. According to Nimbārkācārya's *svābhāvika-bhedābhedavāda*, the omniscient and omnipotent Brahman is naturally (*svabhāvataḥ*) capable of manifesting Himself in *jīva* and *jagat*. The world and the *jīva* are both, naturally, as parts and powers, dependent on (and hence non-different from) Brahman, the whole and the substratum of power. At the same time, Brahman, as a whole and the repository of powers, is over and above His parts and powers.

Defects In *Aupādhika-bhedābhedavāda*

According to Nimbārkācārya, however, the *aupādhika-bhedābhedavāda* cannot satisfactorily explain the nature of *jīvas* and their relation with Brahman.

Jīvas cannot be assumed to be parts of Brahman

dissected by *upādhis*. (Brahman is not like an extended field that can be divided into parts by boundaries erected on it.) The view that Brahman is dissectible will go against those Upaniṣadic statements which uphold that Brahman is an indivisible partless one. Moreover if *jīvas* are regarded as parts of Brahman, divided by *upādhis*, then *jīvas* will be non-eternal beings which owe their beginning to causes and conditions. And in that case the Upaniṣadic statements preaching the eternity and beginninglessness (*nityatva* and *ajatva*) of *jīvas* will be contradicted by Bhāskarācārya's view. Even if it be granted that *upādhis* do not dissect Brahman, yet it must be admitted that *jīvas* owe their origin to *upādhis*. And in that case the defects in *jivas* connected with *upādhis* will vitiate pure Brahman.

If Brahman Himself is supposed to become *jivas* with the help of *upādhis*, then Brahman can no longer be held to be an entity over and above the *jīvas*. And in that case it must be admitted that there is only one *jīva* in all the manifold bodies.

If it is maintained that the conditioned consciousness subsisting in *jīvas* is different from the consciousness of Brahman, then Brahman is admittedly different from *jīvas*. Hence the difference of *jīvas* from Brahman will become natural (*svābhāvika*); it can no longer be regarded as a conditional difference (*aupādhika-bheda*).

If Brahman Himself is regarded as becoming *jīvas* due to *upādhis*, then the omniscience of Brahman must be admitted to be covered by *upādhis*. Yet, it must be remembered that the Upaniṣads and other related texts preach the omniscience of Brahman to be *svābhāvika* (natural).

If *upādhis* are regarded to be due to causes, then the question arises: what are the causes of these causes? If causes

are held to be due to other causes, then the second set of causes must be supposed to be due to some other causes. An infinite regress of causes must then be unavoidable. If *upādhis* are viewed to be uncaused then they will become eternal like Brahman.

If *jīvas* are not supposed to exist in their own selves in liberation, then we will have to admit the destruction of liberated *jīvas* in their essences (*svarūpeṇa*). If, however, *jīvas* are supposed to exist in their own selves (*svarūpeṇa*) in the liberated state, then the *aupādhika-bhedābhedavāda* will have to be abandoned, inasmuch as *jīvas* in that case are to be regarded as existent in their own selves even in the absence of *upādhis*. [50]

III

Difference From Rāmānujācārya's *Viśiṣtādvaitavāda*

Like Nimbārkācārya, Rāmānujācārya also describes *jīvas* as parts of Brahman, atomic in magnitude, dependent on God, of the essence of knowledge, knower and infinite in number.[51] He refers to Brahman as Viṣṇu.

However, Nimbārkācārya conceives *jīva* and *jagat* as natural and non-differentiable parts of Brahman, in the sense of His powers (of *cit* and *ānanda*). Rāmānujācārya, on the other hand, maintains that *jīva* and *jagat* are Brahman's parts in the form of His attributes.[52] According to Rāmānujācārya, *jiva-jagat* are Brahman's attributes. Brahman is *śarīrī* (the embodied) and *jīva-jagat* are His *śarīra* (body). As the embodied *jīva* has his body as his part, similarly, Brahman as *śarīrī*, has His *śarīra*, *jīva-jagat*, as His part. Brahman is the qualified one, *viśeṣya*, and *jīva* and *jagat* are its qualities, *viśeṣaṇas*.

Since the qualities are inseparable from the qualified, *jīva* and *jagat* are said to be non-different from Brahman. *Jīvas*

are *cit* (conscious) and *jagat* is *acit* (unconscious). Rāmānujācārya's theory of one Brahman, qualified by *cit* and *acit* is known as *viśiṣṭādvaitavāda*.[53]

In Rāmānujācārya's opinion the relation between *jīva-jagat* and Brahman seems also to be one of *bhedābheda* (identity-cum-difference). As parts, *jīva-jagat* are different from Brahman, the whole, yet, as qualities, *jīva-jagat* are non-different from Brahman, the whole.

Nimbārkists like Devācārya and Keśavakaśmīrī Bhaṭṭa criticise Rāmānujācārya's *viśiṣṭādvaitavāda* in the following way.

A quality is referred to as an excluding characteristic (*vyāvarttaka-dharma*). For example, the attribute, '*dāśarathiḥ*' in the expression, '*rāmo dāśarathiḥ*' excludes Rāma from Paraśurāma and Balarāma, But, what would the qualities *jīva* (*cit*) and *jagat* (*acit*) of Brahman exclude Brahman from? There is nothing different from Brahman from which Brahman can be excluded. (Brahman is the only reality, with *jīva* and *jagat* as His qualities. There is no reality apart from these.) Since the excluded entity cannot be established, *cit* and *acit* cannot be indicated as qualities of Brahman.[54]

Moreover, in Rāmānujācārya's opinion, Brahman is the abode of auspicious qualities (*kalyāṇa-guṇa*) like *sarvajñatva* (omniscience), *sarvaśaktimattva* (omnipotence). So Brahman is already a qualified (*viśiṣta*) being. If He is again admitted by Rāmānujā to be qualified by *jīva* and *jagat*, then Rāmānujācārya will be guilty of qualifying what is already qualified by some other qualities[55] (which are entirely different from the former).

In addition, if Brahman is supposed to be qualified by *jīva* and *jagat*, then He will perforce be admitted to be vitiated by the defects of *jīva* and *jagat*.[56] Since *jīva* and *jagat* are eternal

qualities of Brahman, the defects pertaining to *jīvas* and *jagat* will always remain with Brahman.

Brahman is, Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa argues, naturally different from the conscious *jīva* and the unconscious material world in Rāmānujācārya's view. Otherwise, there will be *svabhāvasāṃkarya* (intermixture of the essences) of Brahman and the conscious *jīva* and unconscious matter. Since Brahman is naturally different from *jīvas* and *jagat*, it is sufficient to indicate that the relation between Brahman and *jīva-jagat* is one of *svābhāvika-bhedābheda* (natural identity-cum-difference). There is no further need to say, as Rāmānujācārya does, that the relation between Brahman and *jīva-jagat* is one of *viśeṣya* (the substratum of qualities) and *viśeṣaṇa* (qualities). The relation between *viśeṣya* and *viśeṣaṇa* is one of *svābhāvika-bhedābheda* . To add here, that the relation is one between *viśeṣya* and *viśeṣaṇa* does not serve any purpose. That purpose is already served by saying that the relation between Brahman and *jīva-jagat* is one *svābhāvika-bhedābheda*. Hence for the sake of the law of parsimony (*lāghavanyāya*) *svābhāvika-bhedābhedavāda* is preferable to Rāmānujācārya's *viśiṣṭādvaitavāda.*[57]

Notes & References

1. "*Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṃ vṛkṣaṃ pariṣasvajāte /*

Tayaranyaḥ pippalaṃ svādvattyanaśnannanyo' bhicākaśīti" //

2. "*Ạnantācintya-svābhāvika-svarūpa-guṇa-śaktādibhirbṛhattamo yo ramākāntaḥ puru-ṣottamo brahmaśabdābhidheya.*" Ved. pār. saurabha commentary on *sūtra*, 1.1.1.

3. "*Viśvasya sṛṣṭisthitilayā yasmāt sarvajñādyananta-guṇāśrayād brahmeśakālādi-niyantarbhagavator-bhavanti tadeva .... brahmeti lakṣaṇavākyārthaḥ.*" Ved. pār saurabha commentary on *sūtra*, 1.1.4.

4. "*Nacaivaṃ viṣayaniṣedhaparāṇāṃ bādhaḥ śaṅknīyasteṣāṃ brahmasvarūpaguṇādi-viṣayakeyattā-niṣedhaparatvena samaviṣayatvāt*". Ved. pār. saurabha commentary on *sūtra*, 1.1.4.

5. (i) "*Brahma svaśakti-vikṣepeṇa jagadākāraṃ svātmānaṃ pariṇamayya avyākṛtena svarupeṇa śaktimatā kṛtimatā pariṇatameva bhavati.*" Ved. pār. saurabha commentary on *sūtra* 1.4.26.

(ii) "*Sarvajñaḥ sarvaśaktirapracyuta-svarūpaḥ paramātmā svātmaka-svādhiṣṭhita-nijaśakti-vikṣepeṇa jagadākāraṃ svātmānaṃ pariṇamayati.*" *Vedāntakaustabha* commentary on *sūtra* 1.4.26.

6. "*Nimittañca svasvānādikarma-saṃskāra-vaśībhūtāt-yanta saṅkucita-bhoga-smaraṇārha jñānadharmānāṃ cetanānāṃ karma-phalabhogārha-jñānaprakāśena*

tattat- karmaphala-tattadbhogasādhanaiḥ saha yoyayitṛtvam". Siddhāntajāhnavī (Kāśi edition) p. 121. See also *Vedāntakaustubha*, 1.1.2.

7. (i) "*Yathorṇanābhiḥ sṛjate gṛhnate ca . . . . tathākṣarāt sambhatīha viśvam.*" Mund. Up. 1.1.7

(ii) "*Prasārya ca yathāṅgāni kurmaḥ saṃharate punaḥ, tadvad bhūtāni bhūtātmā sṛṣṭāni grasate punaḥ". Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva,* 326, 39.

8. (i) "*Tatsṛṣṭvā tadevānuprāviśat. Tadanupraviśya sacca tyaccābhavat.*" (By creating that He entered into it and became existent and took particular forms." Tait. Up. 2.6.)

(ii) "*Seyaṃ devatā imāstisro devatā anenaiva jīvenātmanānupraviśya namarūpe vyākarot.*" (That deity, having entered the three elements as a soul, manifested Himself by different names and forms. Chānd. Up. 6.3.3)

9. Specifically, the world and the individual souls have been described in Nimbārka philosophy as '*pādas*' (aspects) of Brahman.

10. In the state of *pralaya* all manifest existents are submerged in Brahman in a latent or undifferentiated state. At the time of creation Brahman reveals (projects) His latent powers in manifest forms.

11. "*Brahmaṇaścetanācetanayośca svarūpeṇa behdaḥ . . . . . brahmātmakatvāt- anniyamyatvatādvyāpyatva-tattvatrasattva-parādheyatvādi-yogena cābhedah.*" *Siddhāntajāhnāvī* (Kāśī edition), p. 44. Brahman being all-pervasive (as the essence of all), independent, the container of all, is different from the world of conscious and unconscious beings. The latter is non-different from

Brahman, as it is dependent on Brahman and contained in Him.

12. That *jīvas* and the world are parts of Brahman is evident from the following comments:

(i) "*Mamaivāṃśo jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanaḷı.*" (The *jīvas* are my eternal parts in the world. *Gītā*, 15.7)

(ii) "*Viṣṭabhyāhamidaṃ kṛtsnamekāṃśena sthito jagat.*" (I have entered into the whole, the world remains as a part of mine, *Gītā*, 10. 42).

(iii) "*Amśo nānāvyāpadeśādanyathā cāpi dāśakitavāditva-madhīyate eke*". B.S. 2.3.42.

Nimbārkācārya urges that the *sūtra* quoted above shows that Brahman is both different from *jīvas* and identical with them. The *sūtra* shows that since Brahman is omnisçient, He is different from *jīvas* with limited knowledge; the *jīvas* are thus parts of Brahman. Yet Brahman is identical with *jīvas* as is evident from the statement, 'thou art that', and also from the fact that the *Atharva Veda* maintains that even people from lower class and the gamblers are Brahman.

13. "*Bhoktrāpatteravibhāgaścet syāllokavat*". (Brahman cannot be objected to be the enjoyer as He is identical and different from the *jīvas* like the sea and its waves.)

14. "*Itaravyapadeśādhitākaraṇādi doṣaprasaktiḥ*". B.S. 2.1.20. (Since Brahman is said to be identical with the *jīvas*, there is the defect of Brahman doing harm to Himself.) Ved. pār. saurabha commentary: "*Itarasya jīvasya vyapadeśāt brahmatvakathanāt hitākaraṇādidoṣa-prasaktiḥ.*"

15. "*Adhikaṃ tu bhedanirdeśāt.*" B.S.2.1.21.

Ved. pār. saurabha commentary: "*sukhaduḥkhabhoktuḥ śārirādhikamutkṛṣṭaṃ brahmajagatkartṛ, 'ātmānamanantaro yamayit' īti vyapadeśānna tayoratyantābhedo' sti yato hitākaraṇādidoṣa-prasaktiḥ syāt.*"

16. "*Aśmādivacca tadanupapattiḥ*" B.S. 2.1.22.

17. "*Aṃśāṃśībhāvājjīvaparamātmanor- bhedābhedau darśayati. Paramātmano jīvo' ṃśaḥ, 'jñānjñau dvāvajāvīśānīśā' vityādi-bhedavyapadeśāt; 'tattvamasī' tyādyabhedavyapa-deśācca. Api ca atharvanikāḥ 'brahmadāśā bhrahmadāsā brahmakitavā' iti brahmaṇo hī kitavāditvamadhīyate.*" Ved. pār. saurabha commentary on B.S. 2.3.42.

18. "*Mantravarṇācca*". B.S. 2.3.43.

19. "*Pādo 'sya viśvābhūtāni.*" Chānd. Up. 3.12.6.

20. "*Api ca smaryate.*" (Even the *smṛti* says this. B.S. 2.3.44.)

21. "*Mamaivāṃśa jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*" *Gītā*, 15.7.

22. "*Tadanayatvamārambhanaśabdādibhyaḥ.*" [Non-difference follows from the Upaniṣadic statement, 'transformations are different due to names and forms' (*vācārambhanavikāranāmadheyam.*)]

23 "*Aitādātmyamidaṃ sarvam.*" Chānd. Up. 6.2.3.

24. "*Tattvamasi*". Chānd. Up. 6.8.7.

25. Ved. pār. saurabha commentary on 2.1.14.

26. (i) "*Sattvāccāvarasya.*" (Before creation the effect, the world, was in the cause, Brahman. B.S. 2.1.16.)

(ii) "*Asadvyapadeśānneti cenna, dharmāntareṇa vākyaśeṣāt yukteḥ śabdāntarācca.*" (It is not true that the world was non-existent before creation, as the *Chāndogya Upanisad* says. From the last words of the saying, and also from reasoning, it is evident that the world existed with subtle characteristics. B.S. 2.1.17.)

(iii) "*Paṭavacca*". (Like the unfolding of a piece of cloth, the world appears from its unmanifest form in a manifest form. B.S. 2.1.18.)

(iv) "*Yathā ca prāṇādi.*" (As the winds in the breathing exercise become dormant in *prāṇa*, so the world becomes dormant in the state of *pralaya*. B.S. 2.1.19.)

27. "*Mūrtāmūrtādikaṃ viśvaṃ svakāraṇe bhinnābhinnasambandhena sthātumarhati behdābhedavyapadeśādahikuṇḍalavat.*" Ved. pār. saurabha commentary on B.S. 3.2.27.

28. God is the creator, as is evident from the Upaniṣadic statements. B.S. 2.3.13.

29. "The order of *pralaya* (dissolution) is to be understood from the reverse order of creation, from reasoning." B.S. 2.3.14

30. "All this is identical with Brahman."

31. See note 23, p. 10.

32. "O gentle one, at the beginning this was existent (*sat*), one without the second. It judged, 'I shall be many'." Chānd. Up. 6.2.

33. "All this is Brahman." Chānd. Up. 3.14.1.

34. "He Himself created Himself (in the form of the manifold world)". Tait. Up. 2.7.

35. "*Amṛtaṃ caiva mṛtyuśca sadasaccāhamarjuna.*" *Gītā*, 9.19.

36. "*Na tadasti binā yat syānmayā*". *Gītā*, 19.39.

37. "*Bahirantaśca bhūtānāmacaraṃ carameva ca*". *Gītā*, 13.15.

38. "*Devā manuṣyāḥ paśavaḥ pakṣivṛkṣasarīsṛpāḥ / Rūpametadanantasya viṣṇorbhinnamivasthitam*" //

Viṣṇupurāṇa, 1.19.47.

"*Etadvijānatā sarvaṃ jagat sthāvarajaṅgamam / Draṣṭavyamātmavadviṣṇuryato 'yaṃ viśvarūpadhṛk* //

Viṣṇupurāṇa, 1.19.48.

39. *Vedantadarshan*, Swami Santadas Institute of Culture, 2005, pp. 16-17.

40. See *Govindabhāṣya*, 1.1.3, 1.1.11, 1.3.9, 2.1.9, 2.1.27, 2.1.37.

41. "*Parasyāṃśo jīvaḥ aṃśurivāṃśumataḥ brahma khalu śaktimadekaṃ vaṣtu brahmaśaktirjīvo brahmaika-deśatvāt brahmāṃśo bhavati.*" (*Govindabhāṣya on 2.3.41.*) "*Loke yathā daṇḍinaḥ puruṣābhede 'pi asti daṇḍapuruṣayoḥ svarūpato bhedastathā śaktimato brahmaṇaḥ śaktyabhede 'pi śaktibrahmamaṇoḥ so 'stīti na kṣatiḥ*" (*Govinda-bhāṣya* on 2.1.13.)

42. "*Bhogamātrasāmyaliṅgācceti sūtre mokṣo 'pi tayordvaitanirūpaṇācca.*" (*Govinda-bhāṣya* on 1.1.2.) See also his commentaries on 4.4.12-14.

43. *Govindabhāṣya* on 1.1.20-21.

44. "*Na vā svagatabhedavaditi.*" *Govindabhāṣya* on 3.2.28.

45. "*Vibhūtve sati aṇutvādikamacintyśaktiyogāt.*" *Govindabhāṣya* on 1.2.7.

46. "*Brahmaiva hi kāraṇātmanā kāryātmanā vyavasthitam.*" *Bhāskarabhāṣya*, 1.1.11.

"*Kāryarūpeṇa nānātvamabhedaḥ kāraṇātmanā /*
Hemātmanā yathā'bḥedaḥ kunḍalādyātmanā bhidā" //
Bhāskarabhāṣya, sūtra 1.1.4.

47. "*Ato bhinnābhinnarūpaṃ brahmeti sthitam.*"
Ibid

48. "*Sa ca bhinnābhinnasvarūpo'bhinnarūpaṃ svābhāvikamaupādhikantu bhinna-rūpam.*"
Bhāskarabhāṣya, sūtra 2.3.43.

49. "*Svatśca kāraṇaṃ kūṭasthaṃ nityamekamevādivitīyaṃ paścattu kāryaṃ kādācitkaṃ pravarttate . . . . svato'bhinnatvādāgantu-katvācca pṛthivyādisthāna-kṛatasya rūpasya.*" *Bhāskarabhāṣya*, on *sūtra* 3.2.11.

50. See *Nimbārkāchārya, Tanhar Darshanik Matabad O Sadhanapranali*, Swami Dhananjaydas, 3rd. part, pp. 17-18.

51. *Śrībhāṣya*, commentary on *sūtras* 2.3.19-20, 2.3.33

52. *Evaṃ jīvaparayor-viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣayoraṃśāṃśītvam-upapadyate.*" *Śrībhāṣya*, commentary on *sūtra* 2.3.45.

53. "*Jīvaparyorviśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyatvakṛtaṃ svabhāvavailakṣaṇyamāśritya bhedanirdeśāḥ pravarttante, abhedanirdeśāstu pṛthak-siddhyanarha-viśeṣaṇānāṃ viśeṣya-paryantatvamāśritya mukh-yatvena upapadyante . . . . jīvaśarīraka-brahma-vācakatvena ekārthābḥidhāyitvāt.*" *Śrībhāṣya*, commentary on *sūtra* 2.3.45

54. *Siddhāntajāhnavī*, *sūtra* 1.1.1.

55. The defect is referred to by Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa as '*viśiṣṭavaiśiṣṭa*'. The adoption of the *viśiṣṭavaiśiṣṭya* view will undermine Rāmājujācārya's *viśiṣṭādvaita-vāda*.

56. It is to be noted that in the Nimbārkist's view also *jīva* and *jagat* are qualities of Brahman. But they are regarded by the Nimbārkist to be qualities of Brahman in the sense that they are modifications of the powers of Brahman, like *cit* and *ānanda*.

57. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā*, *sūtra* 2.3.46.

Chapter - II

BRAHMAN ACCORDING TO NIMBĀRKA PHILOSOPHY

Nimbārkācārya and his pupil Śrīnivāsācārya describe Brahman as omniscient, omnipotent, controller of all, qualified by infinite auspicious qualities. Commenting on the *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.2, "*Janmādyasa yataḥ*" (That from which there is birth etc.), Nimbārkācārya contends that Brahman is that, by which the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the infinitely varied universe, consisting of infinite parts related to one another, and revealed in an infinite variety of names and forms, is possible. Accordingly, Brahman is omniscient and the repository of infinite auspicious qualities. He controls Brahmā, Maheśvara and time.[1] Nimbārkācārya's pupil Śrīnivāsācārya, in his *Vedāntakaustubha*, gives the following description of the characteristics of Brahman in interpreting the same Brahmasūtra.

Brahman is the Lord of all, the omniscient one, the ultimate cause of all powers, the controller of all, the divine *puruṣottama* Śrīkṛṣna. And the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the world[2] manifested in various names and forms is possible because of Him.[3]

Brahmasūtra 1.1.1 states that Brahman is the object of enquiry for those seeking liberation.[4] The *lakṣaṇa* (characteristic mark) of Brahman is described in the Brahmasūtra, "*Janmādyasya yataḥ*" (B.S. 1.1.2). This *sūtra* is written following the utterances regarding Brahman in the third *vallī* of *Taittīriya Upaniṣad*. In that context Varuṇa describes the characteristic mark of Brahman. Varuṇa remarks: "Strive to know that from which all these things are born, that by which the born are kept alive, that in which these beings enter after

dissolution. That is Brahmaṇ". ("*Yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvanti, yat prayāntyabhisaṃviśanti tat vijijñāsasva, tad brahma.*")

It is clearly indicated above that Brahman is ultimately responsible for the creation, sustenance, controlling and the dissolution of the world. After describing the characteristic mark of Brahman in this way, the same *vallī* of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* further adds: (i) Brahman is truth, knowledge, and infinite. ("*Satyaṃ jñānamanantaṃ brahma*". Tait. Up. 2.1); (ii) Brahman is bliss. ("*Ānando brahma*". Tait. Up. 3.6.)

Since Brahman is described in the Upaniṣad and in the *Brahmasūtra* as the cause of this infinitely varied world, it follows that Brahman must be omniscient and omnipotent. Only an omniscient and omnipotent one can create such a world. Śaṃkarācārya also says in his commentary on the B.S. 1.1.2, that omniscience of Brahman is also implied in this *sūtra*. ("*Jagatkāraṇapradarśanena sarvajñaṃ brahmety upakṣiptam.*")

Swami Santadas remarks in this context in *Vedantadarshan* that since Brahman has been described to be the sole cause of the world, it is implied that Brahman is both the efficient and material cause of the world. Since it is maintained that at *pralaya* the world becomes submerged in Brahman, it is evidently established that there is no other material cause of the world than Brahman. Thus Brahman's power to create, sustain and dissolve the world is ever present in Brahman. Brahman creates, sustains and dissolves the world again and again with the help of this power. Thus B.S. 1.1.2 is to be understood, says Swami Santadas, as implying that Brahman is naturally (*svarūpataḥ*) omnipotent. This creator, sustainer and dissolver of the world must, moreover, be understood to be something over and above the world.

Swami Santadas adds that since Brahman is the only material cause of the world, the world is but a *rūpa* (form) of Brahman. Just as golden bracelet, earrings etc. are forms of gold itself, they are nothing but gold, in the same way, the world is nothing but Brahman; it is non-different from Brahman. Since Brahman creates and manifests this world, the world is pervaded by Him. Brahman as the *vyāpaka* (pervader) is thus wider in existence than the *vyāpya* (pervaded) world. He is of the form of the world, and yet something over and above it.[5]

A
Brahman As The Efficient And Material Cause

That Brahman is both the efficient and material cause of the world is clearly understood from the following Upaniṣadic texts and Brahmasūtras.

(i)"It observed: I shall be many". ("*Tadaikṣata vạhu syāṃ prajāyeya*". Chānd. Up. 6.2.). (ii)"In this (Brahman) the three (God, *jīva* and *jagat*) are well established." ("*Tasmiṃstrayaṃ supratiṣṭhā*". Śveta. Up. 1.7.). (iii) "Wise men see the source of the origination of beings as Brahman, who is the ultimate agent and God." ("*Yadbhūtayoniṃ paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ kartāramīśaṃ puruṣaṃ brahmayonim* . . ." Kaṭha. Up. 2.2.9). (iv) "It is the one who is (both) the inner self of all beings and the exterior form of each being with form." ("*Ekastathā sarvabhūtāntarātmā rūpaṃ rupaṃ pratirūpo bahiśca.*" Kaṭha. Up. 2.2.10). (v) "Just as the spider creates the web out of itself, and consumes the same within itself, just as the shrubs and trees grow out of the earth, and hair grows out of the man, in the same way, the world emerges out of Brahman who remains untransformed (undistorted)." ("*Yathorṇnābhiḥ sṛjate gṛhnate ca, yathā pṛthivyāmoṣadhayaḥ sambhavanti, yathā sataḥ puruṣāt keśalomāni, tathākṣarāt sambhatīha viśvam.*" Mund. Up. 1.1.7). (vi) "O gentle one, just as from the

shining fire thousands of similar sparks emanate, in the same way different beings are born out of, and are again submerged in the unchanging Brahman." ("*Yathā sudīptāt pāvakāt visphuliṅgāḥ sahasraśaḥ prabhavante sarūpāḥ, tathākṣarād vividhāḥ saumya bhāvāḥ prajāyante tatra caivāpiyanti*." Mund. Up. 2.1.1). (vii) "Then He Himself made Himself." ("*Tadātmānaṃ svayamakuruta*." Tait. Up. 2.7). (viii) "The harmony between the major premise (*pratijñā*) and the example (*dṛṣṭānta*) is established from the decision that Brahman is not just the material cause (*prakṛti*)". ("*Prakṛtiśca pratijñādṛṣṭānuparodhāt*". B.S. 1.4.23).[6] (ix) "It is so concluded from Upaniṣadic statements." ("*Abhidhyopadeśāt*". B.S.1.4.24).[7] (x) "From the fact that Brahman transformed Himself." ("*Ātmakṛte pariṇāmāt*". B.S. 1.4.26).[8] (xi) "Brahman is described as the origin (of the *jīvas* and *jagat*)." ("*Yoniśca gīyate*". B.S. 1.4.27).

From the statements numbered as (ii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (x) it is evident that Brahman is the material cause of the world and *jīvas*. Statements numbered as (i), (iii), (v), (vii), (viii), (ix), (x) specifically state Brahman to be both the material and efficient cause of the world and *jīvas*.

Brahman is not supposed to be the efficient cause of *jīva* and *jagat* in the sense that He takes something other than Himself as the matter and creates the *jīva* and *jagat* out of it. (Just as the potter creates the pot out of clay.) There is nothing other than Brahman.[9] Thus Brahman is the efficient cause in the sense that He creates *jīva* and *jagat* by revealing (*vikṣepena*) His own powers of *cit* (consciousness) and *ānanda* (bliss). *Jīva* and *jagat* are the manifest forms of His subtle, unmanifest specific powers. Since these specific powers form His essence (*svarūpa*), He can also be said to be the material cause of *jīva* and *jagat*. Brahman thus creates *jīva* and *jagat* by transforming His own specific powers, and is thus their material cause. Yet,

it must be remembered that Brahman really remains untransformed through creation. His powers of *cit* and *ānanda* enter into *jīvas* and *jagat*. Yet He is not exhausted in the living beings and the world. He is something over and above them.

B
Brahman As Omniscient and Omnipotent

We have already shown (on p. 34) that as the creator of the infinitely varied world, Brahman must be omniscient and omnipotent. We learn that omniscience and omnipotence of Brahman are His natural (*svābhāvika*) qualities from the Upaniṣadic statement, "Brahman has different natural powers like knowledge, strength and action." ("*Parā'sya śaktirvividhaiva śruyate svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca.*" Śvet. Up. 6.8.) From the fact that omniscience and omnipotence are the natural qualities of Brahman, it follows that Brahman possesses them in all circumstances; He never lacks them.

Taittīriya Upaniṣad, 2.1 states that Brahman is truth, knowledge and infinite ("*Satyaṃ jñānamanantaṃ brahma.*"). Thus we can conclude that truth, existence and knowledge are the essential attributes of Brahman.

Since the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says that Brahman observed (*tadaikṣata*), "I shall be many", it is obvious that the creator of the world has the power of '*īkṣaṇa*'. The word, '*īkṣaṇa*' stands for 'seeing', 'knowing', 'observing'. The unconscious *prakṛti*[10] cannot possess such a power. Hence the creator must be a knower, seer, observer and possessed of the will-power. This is the opinion that Nimbārkācārya forms from the interpretation of B.S. 1.1.5, '*Īkṣaternāśabdam*'.

C
Brahman As Both *Nirguṇa* And *Saguṇa*

From a study of the texts mentioning Brahman's power

of *īkṣaṇa* we can gather that Brahman is both *saguṇa* (qualified) and *nirguṇa* (qualityless). The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* elaborately states Brahman's power of *īkṣaṇa*:

"O gentle one, at the beginning there was one existent (Brahman) without a second. He observed, 'I shall be many'. He created fire (*teja*) . . . . Then that deity (Brahman) judged, 'with the help of my own self I shall enter into these the three deities (fire, water and earth) and shall manifest them in different names and forms . . . . I shall make these three work unitedly.'[11] By thus entering into these three deities with His own self this deity manifested Himself into names and forms." ("*Sadeva saumyedamagra āsidekamevādvitīyam. Tadaikṣata vahu syāṃ prajāyeyeti. Tattejo'sṛjata . . . . Seyaṃ devataikṣata hantāhamimāstisro devatā anena jīvenātmanānupraviśya nāmarūpe vyākaravānīti. . . . tāsāṃ trivṛtaṃ trivṛtamekaikāṃ karavānīti. Seyaṃ devatemāstisro devatā. . . . nāmarūpe vyākarot*. Chānd. Up. 6.3.2.)[12]

Analysing these Upaniṣadic statements, Swami Santadas says in his *Vedantadarshan*[13] that these texts are specially describing the state before creation, which is the essential state (*svarūpāyasthā*) of Brahman. It is first stated that, before creation (manifestation), the world and *jīva* existed as identical with the one and only existent Brahman. At that state there was no expression of anything as different from Brahman. It is then stated that, that Brahman, in that state, possesses the power of willing (to create). He also possesses the power of preserving and dissolving the creation. Hence He is omniscient and omnipotent. It is next stated that, that Brahman manifested Himself in the form of the world. This means that He not only possesses the knowledge and power to create, preserve etc., He also actually controls such knowledge and power.

It has to be observed, first, that Brahman is an eternal existent entity over and above the world (*jagatātita*). Secondly, the past, present and future states of the world are established in Brahman in an unmanifest form before creation. Since the attributes and powers[14] of Brahman are not manifestly expressed in Him before creation, He can, accordingly, be said, in a sense, to be attributeless (*nirguṇa*). Yet, even before creation, Brahman is not absolutely attributeless inasmuch as, as already indicated above, these powers and attributes belong to Him naturally. Hence they are present in Brahman in latent forms even before the process of creation starts.

The essence of Brahman is not fully expressed by the description that He is attributeless. He is essentially omniscient and omnipotent. As an omniscient and omnipotent creator, preserver and dissolver of the world and *jīvas*, Brahman is thus eternally *saguṇa*. Creation is due to His power of *īkṣaṇa*. He creates the *jīvas* by the *vikṣepa* (revelation) of *cit* (consciousness). *Jīvas* are thus the gross manifestation of His subtle power of *cit*. He creates the world by the revelation of His quality of *ānanda* (bliss). The world is the gross manifestation of His subtle attribute of *ānanda*.

As already explained above, the *jīvas* and *jagat* are, in a sense, His power or attributes. Brahman, the substratum of power and qualities is over and above His powers and qualities. Rāma has different powers, like the power of observation, hearing etc. Hence Rāma is not exhausted in these powers. He is the repository of innumerable other powers. Thus, Rāma exists beyond his specific powers. In this way, Brahman, the substratum of powers, exists over and above them. Indicating the existence of Brahman over and above *jīvas* and *jagat*, the Upaniṣads describe Him to be *nirguṇa* (attributeless). Indicating the creation of *jīvas* and *jagat*, the Upaniṣads describe Him to be *saguṇa* (qualified).

Every qualified being (*guṇī*) is essentially over and above the qualities (*guṇātīta*). In this sense it is *nirguṇa* (attributeless). However, since qualities inhere in it, it is also *saguṇa* (qualified). In the same way, Brahman is *nirguṇa*, as being over and above the qualities, and also *saguṇa* as the substratum of qualities. *Jīvas* and *jagat* are the expressed manifestations of His qualities. He manifests them through the exercise of His power known as *māyā* or *prakṛti*. As the eternal locus (*āśraya*) of these powers and qualities Brahman is qualified. As the locus exists over and above the powers and qualities, Brahman is *nirguṇa*. Thus the statements describing Hiṃ as *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa* are harmonised in Nimbārkā philosophy in this way.

It is to be noted in this context that many masters (*ācāryas*) of the Nimbārka school opine that by saying, that Brahman is *nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa*, it is implied that He is *prākṛta-heyaguṇa-rahita* (devoid of natural reprehensible qualities) and *prākṛta-viśeṣa-dharma-rahita* (devoid of natural specific quality). In their opinion, the negative particle, '*nir*', also implies that the qualities of Brahman are not limited to any specific qualities or to any specific degree (*iyattāniṣedhapara*).[15]

A question arises at this stage. How can it be maintained that Brahman is devoid of natural debased qualities (*prākṛta-heyaguṇa-rahita*)? Brahman is the substratum of all natural things. Nothing can exist without Brahman, the efficient and material cause of the natural world. Thus the natural debased qualities also inhere in Him. So what could be meant by stating that there is no such natural debased qualities in Brahman?

The question can be answered in two ways. Firstly, it can be said that everything exists in Brahman. Yet, although Brahman is omnipresent, like ether (*ākāśa*), He is not involved

(*lipta*), and not exhausted by the limitations of any limited natural things. He is not bounded (*ābaddha*) by the *guṇas* of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.[16] Although *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* inhere in Brahman, and are manifestly expressed by Him, yet He is over and above them.[17]

Secondly, old age, death, suffering, hunger, thirst etc. are natural phenomena, which are due to *māyā* or *prakṛti*. They are produced by the power of *māyā* which Brahman wields. *Māyā* is thus controlled by Brahman, the Lord of *māyā*.[18] The controlled thing cannot have any influence on the controller. Hence the natural or *māyika* debased qualities cannot touch the essence of Brahman. These natural debased qualities do subsist in Brahman, the all-pervasive one, yet He is not polluted by these qualities. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* states: "*Eṣa ātmā apahatapāpmā vijaro vimṛtyuḥ viśokaḥ vijighatṣaḥ apipāsaḥ satyakāmaḥ satyasaṃkalpaḥ . . .*" (Chānd. Up. 8.1.5) (This *ātman* / Brahman is beyond sin, beyond old age and death, beyond grief, beyond hunger, beyond thirst. His desire is necessarily fulfilled. All his resolutions come true.) Thus the undesirable (*heya*) natural phenomena like old age, death, grief, hunger etc. cannot pollute the essence of Brahman. On the other hand, Brahman is the repository of blessed qualities like having His desire, resolutions etc. necessarily fulfilled (*satyakāmaḥ, satyasaṃkalpaḥ*).

Visṇupurāṇa also states that Brahman is qualified by infinite blessed qualities like knowledge, power, strength, divine qualities, virility, energy etc. And He is without despicable qualities.[19]

In his *Daśaślokī* Nimbārkācārya states:

"Svabhāvato 'pāsta-samastadoṣam
Aśeṣakalyāṇa-guṇaikarāśim."

(He is naturally devoid of all defects, and the one identical collection of infinite auspicious qualities)

All natural qualities produced by *māyā* are destructible and impermanent. Hence they cannot be blessed. Yet, since *māyā* is a power of Brahman, it inheres in Brahman. In this sense even the despicable qualities have as their locus Brahman. Yet, Brahman is not vitiated by them. In this way Brahman can be said to be both different and non-different from the despicable natural qualities.

Next, we shall discuss the four *pādas* (aspects / parts) of Brahman which will further enlighten us about the theory of *bhedābheda* / *dvaitādvaita* upheld by Nimbārkācārya.

D
The Four *Pādas* Or Aspects Of Brahman

According to Nimbārkācārya Brahman eternally exists as *jīva*, *jagat*, *īśvara* and *akṣara* (unchanging) Brahman. They are known in Nimbārka philosophy as the four *pādas* [20] of Brahman.

1. *Akṣara* Brahman

Brahman is *saccidānanda* (existent, conscious and blissful). Brahman eternally enjoys His essential *ānanda* (bliss). In this form there is no specific action of Brahman. His power of *īkṣaṇa* is not expressed in this form. He is engrossed in His essential *ānanda*. Even in this *akṣara* (unchanging) form, Brahman is not devoid of qualities or powers. Yet they remain in Him in an unmanifest, inactive form. [This is why Upaniṣads describe Brahman as *nirguṇa*, *nirviśesa* and *akṣara* (attributeless and unchanging).] Yet, even in this *akṣara* form Brahman is the locus of *jīva*, *jagat* and *īśvara* (God). The *Śvetaśvatara Upaniṣad* says that Brahman is that *akṣara* in which all the three, *jīva*, *jagat īśvara* are firmly established.[21]

It means that the powers of Brahman have not started expressing themselves manifestly in this form. Thus *jīva*, *jagat* and God are firmly present in *akṣara* Brahman in a latent form.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 2.1 it is said that Brahman is the truth of truths (*satyasya satyam*). In *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* 2.3 it is stated, Brahman has two forms, the manifest and unmanifest (*dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe mūrtañcāmūrtañca*). Earth, water and fire are Brahman's gross forms (*mūrtarūpa*). Air and ether constitute Brahman's subtle forms (*amūrtarūpa*). That Brahman has a form transcending these gross and subtle forms, is indicated in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 2.3: "*Athāto ādeśo neti neti, na hyetasmāditi netyanyat paramastyatha nāmadheyaṃ satyasya satyamiti.*" [The aforesaid subtle forms are not 'the truth of truths.' This 'truth of truths', the remaining form of Brahman, is to be known by following the dictum, 'not this, not this'. 'Not this' implies that it is not the case that Brahman does not have any form greater than the (aforesaid gross and subtle forms). Hence this (greater from) is called 'the truth of truths.]

Interpreting the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* .statement mentioned above, the author of *Brahmasūtra* states:

"*Prakṛtaitāvatvaṃ hi pratiṣedhati tato vravīti ca bhūyaḥ.* " (B.S. 3.2.22)

Commenting on this *sūtra* Nimbārkācārya asks: do the words, '*neti neti*', mean (i) to say that this gross and subtle forms do not belong to Brahman; or (ii) do they mean to deny that Brahman is not just these? He concludes: in order to answer these questions, the author of *Brahmasūtra* urges that the words, '*neti neti*' do not imply that the gross and subtle forms do not belong to Brahman. They are only meant to deny that Brahman is not just these forms. This transcendent form of Brahman is *akṣara* Brahman. ("*Kiṃ neti neti vākyaṃ . . . ityādinā prakṛtaṃ*

mūrtāmūrtādirūpaṃ pratiṣedhatyathavā prakṛtarūpayogāt prāptaṃ brahmaṇa etāvavatvamiti sandehe . . . . prakṛtaitāvatvameva pratiṣedhati." *Nimbārkabhāṣya* on B.S. 3.2.22.)

The *Aitareya Upaniṣad* says that before creation there was only one *akṣaṛa* Brahman. ("*Ātmā vā idameka evāgra āsit.*" *Aitareya Upaniṣad*, 1.1.) Nothing else was manifested then. ("*Nānyat kiñanamiṣat*".) Explaining this state of *akṣara* Brahman, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* says that it is not possible to describe Brahman in detail. He can be briefly said to be *sat* (existent). Before creation Brahman alone exists, nothing else does. All that is later created by Him are submerged in a latent form in this *akṣara* Brahman. "There being nothing else besides Him, who will smell Him, who will see Him . . . . Who will feel Him? Who will know Him by whom all is known? By which sign will anyone know the knower of all?" ("*Yatra vā asya sarvamātmaivābhūt, tat kena kaṃ jighret, tat kena kaṃ paśyet . . . kena kaṃ vijāniyāt. Yenedaṃ sarvaṃ vijānāti taṃ kena vijāniyāt, vijñātāramare kena vijānīyāditi.* Bṛhad. Up. 2.4.14 and 4.5.15.) This Brahman can neither be perceived nor inferred. He can only be indicated negatively by saying that, 'He is not this', 'He is not this.' However, although negatively indicated, He is not non-existent. As already shown above (p. 38), the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* describes Brahman as truth, knowledge and infinity. Moreover, the essence of Brahman is pure bliss ("*Ānando brahmeti vyajanāt.*" Tait. Up. 3rd *vallī*).

2. Brahman As *Īśvara*

The second *pāda* or aspect of Brahman is His form as *īśvara* (God). As already remarked above, Brahman creates the manifold universe by revealing His power of *ānānda* in an infinite variety of ways. As *akṣara*, Brahman (before creation)

feels His essential *ānanda*, bereft of all specific forms, as pure *ānanda*. As *īśvara*, however, He enjoys His *ānanda* in an infinite variety of ways. *Jīva* views things partially in a successive order. *Jagat* thus appears to him successively and in limited forms. Brahman is known as *īśvara* when the successive *jagat* appears to Him in its entirety and simultaneously. In this sense *īśvara* is saïd to enjoy *ānanda* in a totality of infinite ways, eternally.[22]

In His form as *īśvara* He is the creator, presever etc. of the world consisting of an infinite variety of names and forms. What is known as *saguṇa* Brahman is thus *īśvara*. In this way *īśvara* is the omniscient, omnipotent, controller of all. *Īśvara* is eternal and unchanging. He is not limited to any specific form (*rūpa*).

This form of *īśvara* alone is the object of worship. The *nirguṇa* Brahman cannot be the object of worship. Nimbārkācārya in his *Daśaślokī* says that the object of worship is *īśvara* or *saguṇa* Brahman.[23]Upaniṣads also speak of the worship of *īśvara*. For example, the *Śvetāśatara Upaniṣad* states: "When one perceives the glory of the worshipped Lord, one overcomes grief." ("*Juṣṭaṃ yadā paśyatyanyamīśamasya mahimānamiti vītaśokaḥ*". Švet. Up. 4.11.) In this citation Brahman has been described as the worshipped one, the glorious one, the Lord. In the Brahmasūtras, "*Janmādyasya yataḥ*" (1.1.2) and "*Ikṣaternāśabdam*"[24] (1.1.5.) Brahman has been already indicated as having the characteristics of being the creator, sustainer and dissolver of all. That one who seeks liberation (*mokṣa*), seeks to be united with a worshipable, qualified *Īśvara*, is clearly indicated by Nimbārkācārya in his *Vedāntapārijātasaurabha*: "*Mumukṣuṇā anantācintya svābhāvika-svarūpa-guṇaśaktyādir-bṛhattamo . . . brahma śabdābhidheyaḥ.*" (*Vedantapārijātasaurabha*, commentary on B.S. 1.1.1.)

3. Brahman As *Jagat*

The third *pāda* of Brahman is the world.[25] It is the effect of Brahman's power of *ānanda*. Even though *jagat* is such an effect, yet to the ignorant and bound *jīva*, it appears to be unconscious. Since *jīva* perceives objects partially and in a successive way, *jagat* appears to him/her to be a succession of separate events. But as the entire *jagat* appears to *īśvara* simultaneously, He sees it as changeless (*eksrasa*).

Jagat is created by Brahman with the help of His power known as *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* is constituted by *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.[26] It is referred to as *māyā* or *pradhāna*.[27] According to Nimbārkācārya, *jagat* is not a false appearance. In his opinion *jagat* is a *vikṣepa* (revelation) of Brahman's power or quality. Even in the Upaniṣads *jagat* is referred to as *sat* (existent). Consider, for example, the Upaniṣadic texts:

(a) "*Kathamasataḥ sajjāyate, sattveva saumyedamagra āsit.*" ("How can it be said that the existent is born of the non-existent? O gentle one, there was, at the beginning, one existent", Chānd. Up. 6.2. 1-2.)

(b)"*Etat sat . . . tasyaitasya sataḥ raso ya eṣa tapati, sato hyeṣa rasaḥ.*" ["That is existent . . . this being existent, this is delight (*rasa*) whom he meditates on, this delight (*rasa*) is existent. Bṛhad. Up. 2.3.2.] Since existent Brahman is its cause, *jagat* must be acknowledged to be existent.

To say that 'real Brahman is the producer of a false appearance' is as senseless as to say, 'a barren woman has a son'. As an eternal part of and being a creation of Brahman, *jagat* cannot be an illusion. However, regarding the *jagat* as different from its cause, Brahman, is of course *avidyā* (ignorance).

4. Brahman As *Jīva*

The fourth padā / aspect of Brahman is the individual *jīva*. According to Nimbārkācārya, *jīva* is atomic and infinite in number. He is both knowledge and a knower. *Jīva's kartṛtva* (agency), *bhoktṛtva* (enjoyerhood) and *jñātṛtva* (knowerhood) are natural and eternal. They exist in *jīva* even when he is liberated. Brahman enters into *jīvas* as an enjoyer.[28] He has, as said earlier, entered into every gross and subtle parts of this infinitely varied *jagat* of names and forms.[29] As the relation between Brahman and *jīva* is one of *bhedābheda*, *jīva* is not a false appearance. Thus Brahman has been stated in Nimbārka philosophy as having four *pādas*. That Brahman has these four *pādas* is evident from the Śvetaśvatara Upaniṣadic statement: "*Udgītametat paramantu brahma tasmiṃstrayaṃ supratiṣṭhā'kṣarañca*." (Śvet. Up. 1.7) [In this unchanging Brahman, the three are well-established.]

E

Refutation of The Advaita Vedānta View of *Svarūpalakṣaṇa* And *Taṭasthalakṣaṇa* of Brahman

The Advaita Vedāntin speaks of two *lakṣaṇas* (characteristics) of Brahman. The *lakṣaṇa* (characteristic) of Brahman that is expressed in the *sūtra*, "*Janmādyasya yataḥ*" is, in the Advaita Vedāntin's view, not Its *svarūpalakṣaṇa*. It is a *taṭasthalakṣaṇa*. *Svarūpalakṣaṇa* expresses the essence of Brahman. Truth, knowledge and infinity (as expressed in the *sūtra*, "*Satyaṃ jñānamanantaṃ brahma.*" Tait. Up. 2.1.1.) are the *svarūpalakṣaṇa* of Brahman. *Taṭasthalakṣaṇa* on the other hand, expresses the inessential characteristic of Brahman. Brahman does not create, preserve and dissolve the *jīvas* and *jagat* in Its essential form. Creation etc. is the work of Brahman when It is associated with *māyā*, *avidyā* (nescience). Hence creatorship etc. is not Brahman's *svarūpalakṣaṇa*.

Taṭasthalakṣaṇa is that characteristic which excludes the characterised thing (*lakṣya*) form others, even without existing as long as the characterised object exists. Creatorship does not belong to Brahman at the time of *pralaya*, yet it excludes entities other than Brahman.[30]

i) Refutation of *Svarūpalakṣaṇa* of Brahman

The Nimbārkist does not agree with the Advaitin's interpretation of *svarūpalakṣaṇa* of Brahman He argues that the *svarūpa* (essence) of anything cannot be its *lakṣaṇa* (characteristic). Only the uncommon feature of a thing is admitted by all to be its *lakṣaṇa*. The *svarūpa* of a pot, clay, is not its *lakṣaṇa*. The spherical shape and the neck of a pot are considered to be its uncommon features, and hence its *lakṣaṇa*. *Lakṣaṇa* excludes that which is different from the *lakṣya*, the *lakṣyetara*. If clay, the *svarūpa* of the pot, is regarded as the *lakṣaṇa* of a pot, then clay itself will have to be admitted as the excluder (*vyāvarttaka*) of things other than the pot. But that is not the case. Only the uncommon features of a pot (like its spherical shape and neck), are what exclude things other than the pot. *Lakṣaṇa* of Brahman must thus be a special characteristic of Brahman, and not Its *svarūpa*.

The Advaitin may defend himself by saying that *svarūpa* itself, may be regarded as *lakṣaṇa* by imagining the characteristic-characterised form (*dharma-dharmī-bhāva*) of *svarūpa* itself. *Satya*, *jñāna* and *ananta* constitute the *svarūpa* of Brahman. Just imagine a distinction between *satya* (true = the characterised = *dharmī*) and *satyatva* (the feature of being true = the characteristic = *dharma*), *jñāna* (knowledge = the characterised = *dharmī*) and *jñānatva* (the feature of being knowledge = the characteristic = *dharma*), *ananta* (infinite = the characterised = *dharmī*) and *aparicchinnatva* (the feature of being infinite = the characteristic = *dharma*). In this way

satyatva, *jñānatva* and *aparicchinnatva* characteristics of Brahman can be regarded as the *lakṣaṇas* of Brahman. Hence the defect arising out of considering *svarūpa* of Brahman as its *lakṣaṇa* no longer vitiates the Advaitin's position.

Rebutting the Advaita defence Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa and Mādhavamukunda say that an imagined *dharma* (characteristic) cannot be the excluder (*vyāvarttaka*) of anything. In the Mīmāṃsā system the firewood used in *yajñas* (sacrifices) is sometimes instructed to be imagined as being the sun. In this instance, *ādityatva* (the characteristic of being the sun) is imagined in the firewood. If an imagined *dharma* is capable of excluding what is other than the characterised (*lakṣyetara*), then the imagined *ādityatva* (in the firewood) can exclude what is 'other than the sun'. However, as the firewood is also 'other than the sun', the imagined *ādityatva* of the firewood would be an excluder of firewood itself. As a matter of fact, however, the *adityatva* characteristic of the firewood is meant to exclude things like darkness[31] and never firewood itself.[32]

Famous Nimbārkists like Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa and Mādhavamukunda have strongly criticised the distinction between *svarūpalakṣaṇa* and *taṭasthalakṣaṇa* of Brahman.

It may be asked: do the Advains use the words, '*satya*', '*jñāna*' and '*ananta*' occurring in the *svarūpalakṣaṇa* as a *yaugika* or a *ruḍha* word? A *yaugika* word retains its etymological meaning. Words like '*satya*' cannot be said to have been used as a *yaugika* word while connoting Brahman's essence. A *yaugika* word is formed by the combination of the *prakṛti* (root) and *pratyaya* (prefix or suffix). If words like '*satya*' are formed out of such a combination, then their meaning must connote objects having different characteristics or aspects. They cannot, thus, be used to connote an attributeless (*nirguṇa*,

nirviśeṣa) Brahman.

A *ruḍha* word has both an etymological and a conventional meaning. Such a word connotes an object which is qualified and is a member of a certain class (*jāti*). If the word, '*satya*' is a *ruḍha* word, then it must connote a qualified and specific object. Hence words like '*satya*' cannot be used to connote a *nirguṇa* Brahman.[33]

In order to defend his position the Advaitin may say that words like '*satya*' are used, while indicating the *svarūpalakṣaṇa* of Brahman, not in their direct connotative meaning (*śakyārtha*). They are rather used here indicating their *lakṣaṇārtha* (indirect meaning). In other words, terms like '*satya*', while used in the direct connotative sense (*śakyārtha*) may connote a qualified object. However, in their *lakṣaṇārtha* (indirect meaning) they connote pure attributeless Brahman.

Such a defence, however, is not acceptable to the Nimbārkist. *Lakṣaṇā* (indirect connotation) is of three forms: *jahatsvārthālakṣaṇā*, *ajahatsvārthālakṣaṇā* and *bhāgatyāgalakṣaṇā*. The Nimbārkist first examines the possibility of terms like '*satya*' having *jahatsvārthālakṣaṇā* meaning. The example used of the latter indirect meaning is the statement, '*Gaṅagāyaṃ ghoṣaḥ*' (the milkman resides in the Ganges). Here the word, '*gaṅgā*', is used to indicate an indirect meaning. The milkman does not reside in the Ganges itself. Here the word '*gaṅgā*' leaves behind its *śakyārtha* (direct meaning), and indirectly means, 'on the bank of the Ganges'. (The milkman really lives on the bank of the Ganges.) Words like '*satya*' can leave behind their *śakyārtha*, and indirectly (*lakṣaṇārthena)* mean things not directly meant by them. In that case, the indirect meaning (*lakṣaṇārtha*) of '*satya*' will be *asatya* (untrue); indirect meaning of '*jñāna*' will be *jaḍa* (unconscious); the indirect meaning of '*ananta*' will be *sānta*

(finite, limited). The *svarūpalakṣaṇa* of Brahman will then be *asatya*, *jaḍa* and *sānta* (untrue, unconscious, inert and finite).

The *ajahatsvārthālakṣaṇā* connotes something indirectly without giving up its *svārtha* (own meaning). For example, when it is said, "*Kākebhyo dadhi rakṣatām*", it is meant that the yoghurt is to be saved not only from the crows, but also from other animals like cats and dogs.

If the word '*satya*' is said to connote something by *ajahatsvārthālakṣaṇā*, then it would connote a thing characterised by *satyatva*. The connoted object of this word would then be characterised by a specific attribute like *satyatva*. Words like '*satya*' would then not be applicable to the *nirguṇa* Brahman.

Words like '*satya*' cannot be said to indicate indirectly the *svarūpa* of Brahman even by the *lakṣaṇā* known as *bhāgatyāgalakṣaṇā*. According to *bhāgatyāgalakṣaṇā*, words in a phrase abandon their adjectival connotation and indirectly signify only the noun (*viśeṣya*) which has these adjectives. Advaitins would thus like to point out that the words, '*satya*', '*jñāna*' and '*ananta*' abandon their primary adjectival meanings, and indicate the noun, 'pure consciousness' ('*śuddha-caitannya*'), of which they are adjectives.[34] The Nimbārkist here points out that even in that case it is not clear what role would words like '*satya*' play in indicating the *svarūpalakṣaṇa* of Brahman. If they do play some role, then words like '*satya*' must be admitted to have at least some indirect connotation. But what would the word '*satya*' specifically signify in this context, by abandoning the adjectival character of *satyatva*? If words like '*satya*' and '*jñāna*' do not have any specific significance, whether directly or indirectly, then would they not be synonymous? Moreover *nirguṇa* Brahman cannot be indicated by any words. No words can indicate Its essence either

by their direct signification or by their indirect signification (*lakṣaṇārtha*)[35]

If the Advaitin maintains that pure consciousness is the indirect meaning (*lakṣaṇārtha*) of words, '*satyaṃj-ñānam-anantam*', then he will have to admit that pure consciousness is the *vācya* (denoted) and words like '*satya*' are its *vācaka* (denoter). The Nimbārkist points out that, this being the case, just as a pot is that which is the *vācya* (the denoted) of the *vācaka śabda* (denotative word), 'pot', Brahman would be the *vācya* of *vācaka-śabdas* like '*satya*', '*jñāna*' etc. And just as the pot is a qualified object, Brahman would also be a qualified being. Since a qualified object, according to the Advaitin, is a false appearance, Brahman would also be a false appearance.[36]

The Advaitin would like to defend himself at this stage. *Satya* (truth) is nothing but the *vyāvṛtti* (exclusion) of the *anṛta* (the false). *Jñāna* (consciousness, knowledge) is nothing but the *vyāvṛtti* of *jaḍa* (unconscious, inert). *Ananta* (infinity) is nothing but the *vyāvṛtti* of the *paricchinna* (finite). Thus, through the types of *vyāvṛtti* mentioned above, words like '*satya*' indirectly signify *nirguṇa* Brahman. Hence *nirguṇa* Brahman can, accordingly, be the *lakṣaṇārtha* of words, without being a denoted (*vācya*) entity. Mādhavamukunda, however, points out that the knowledge of *vyāvṛtti* is dependent on the knowledge of the *dharmī* (the characterised object) which excludes others. Exclusion of falsity means difference of truth from falsity. Knowledge of the difference is dependent on the knowledge of the object (*dharmī*) which is the locus of difference. Hence the Advaitin's contention that the knowledge of the *svarūpa* of Brahman consists of the knowledge of the exclusion of the false, unconscious etc. cannot be admitted. The Advaitin, as a matter of fact, would be forced to admit that the opposite of what he is trying to establish, is true. Actually, the knowledge of the types of exclusion shown by the Advaitin

is dependent on the knowledge of the *svarūpa* of the Brahman. Hence, unless it is admitted that the *svarūpa* of Brahman consists of some qualities, and they are known as such, it cannot be said that the knowledge of the *svarūpa* of Brahman consists of the knowledge of the exclusion of specific qualities.

Mādhavamukunda further points out that the types of exclusion referred to by the Advaitin cannot be true. If they are true, then the characteristics which are the causes of these types of exclusion (*vyāvarttaka-dharmas*) must also be true. Exclusion cannot be admitted in respect of something which does not have those characteristics which are the causes of exclusion (*vyāvarttaka-dharmas*). Hence, Brahman must be admitted to have certain characteristics by virtue of which It excludes the false, the unconscious etc. But, in that case, Brahman cannot be said to be *nirguṇa*. Moreover, if the exclusion of false, unconscious etc. is true in respect of Brahman, then the latter must be regarded to be a characterised (*saguṇa = svaviśeṣa*) entity. And since the exclusions are true, Brahman can no longer be said to be 'one without a second'.

ii) Refutation Of The *Taṭasthalakṣaṇa* of Brahman

As explained earlier, creatorship of Brahman is supposed by the Advaitin as Its inessential *taṭasthalakṣaṇa*. As a characteristic, *taṭasthalakṣaṇa* always characterises a qualified object. Hence, no *taṭasthalakṣaṇa* can be said to express the nature of Brahman, which is *nirguṇa*. If Brahman is said to be the *lakṣya* (the characterised object) of *taṭasthalakṣaṇa*, then Brahman must be said to possess the *dharma* (feature) of being a *lakṣya*. Brahman then must be admitted to be a qualified entity.[37]

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F

Brahman As Conceived By The Advaitin Cannot Be The Cause Of *Jīva* And *Jagat*

The Upaniṣads and *Brahmasūtra* maintain that Brahman is the identical material and efficient cause (*abhinnanimittopādāna-kāraṇa*) of *jīva and jagat*. However, the Nimbārkist points out that Brahman cannot be established as the cause of anything from the Advaita viewpoint. Brahman is conceived by the Advaitin to be *nirguṇa*; and such a *nirguṇa* Brahman cannot cause *jīva and jagat.*

Nimbārkists Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa and Mādhavamukunda point out that the Advaitin is unable to show how Brahman is the cause of the world. He asks: (i) is the pure consciousness / pure Brahman the cause of the world; (ii) is Brahman conditioned by *avidyā* (nescience) (i.e. consciousness of God whose reflection is the *jīva* and *jagat*) the cause of the world; (iii) is God on which nescience (*ajñāna*) is superimposed (*ajñānādhyasta-īśvara*) the cause of *jīva and jagat*?

Nirguṇa Brahman cannot Be The Cause

Pure consciousness or *nirguṇa* Brahman cannot cause *jīva and jagat*. As already shown above, no *lakṣaṇa* of *nirguṇa* Brahman, whether of the *svarūpa* or of the *taṭastha* type can properly be established by the Advaitin. Moreover *nirguṇa* Brahman cannot be the object of any knowledge whatsoever. Because the senses cannot have any contact with Brahman, It cannot be perceived. Because *nirguṇa* Brahman is devoid of specific attributes, there cannot be any *liṅga* (sign) in It, which can play the role of *hetu* (reason) of any inference regarding Brahman. Neither can Brahman be the object of verbal knowledge. [We have already discussed this in the context of

discussing the Advaita view regarding *svarūpalakṣaṇa* of Brahman (p. 52.)] Thus, not being the object of any means of valid cognition, *nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa* Brahman becomes a non-entity (*tuccha* = *avastu*). How can such a non-entity be the cause of the *jīva and jagat?*

Moreover, the Upaniṣads describe Brahman as having the power of *īkṣaṇa* and the will-power of being many, the power of creating, the power of expressing Himself in different names and forms. This is evident from the Upaniṣadic statements like: (i) "*Tadaikṣata vahu syāṃ prajāyeya.*" (Chānd. Up. 6); (ii) "*Tattejo 'sṛjata*" (Chānd. Up. 6.2); (iii) "*Nāmarūpe vyākarot*" (Chānd. Up. 6.2)[38]; (iv) "*Yato vā imāni bhūtani jāyante*" (Tait. Up. 3.1.1). Hence, a *nirguṇa* Brahman, cannot be said to have those attributes like the power of *īkṣaṇa* etc. Thus attributeless pure consciousness cannot be the cause of the world.

Nimbārkara Rejection of *Pratibimbavāda*

The second alternative of Brahman conditioned by root nescience (*māyā*) (i.e. consciousness of God being reflected[39] as the world and *jīvas*) is the cause of the world, is also not acceptable to the Nimbārkist. In the case of a face being reflected in a mirror, both the face and the mirror are constituted by parts, and have particular forms (*rūpas*). However, both Brahman and nescience are, according to the Advaitin, partless and formless. So how can Brahman be reflected in nescience? If it is argued that even a formless and partless sky can be seen to be reflected in water, then the Nimbarkist would retort by saying that since the sky is made of five elements like earth, water, heat, air and ether, the sky is not exactly formless. Moreover, the sky that is reflected is that portion of it that is studded with the sun, the moon and the stars. The omnipresent (*vibhu*) sky is not reflected in water.

The Advaitin maintains that pure consciousness, the prototype (*bimba*) conditioned (*upahita*) by the root nescience (*mūlāvidyā*), is *īśvara*, the ruler of the universe. The same consciousness reflected (*pratibimbita*) in nescience limited by the internal organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*) is *jīva*. Dharmarājādhvarīndra, in his *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, refers to the theory of reflection. The universal consciousness common to *īśvara* and *jīva* is the prototype (*bimba*). *Īśvara* is its reflection in *māyā* in the nature of nescience. *Jīva's* consciousness is its reflection in the internal organs. The former is like the reflection of the sun in the water of tank. The latter is like a reflection of the sun in the water in a vessel. Advaitins are divided in their opinion as to whether there is only one *jīva* or there are many *jīvas*. According to the theory of one *jīva* (advocated by Madhusudana Saraswati and others), the reflection of the prototype is conditioned by nescience (*avidyā*). According to the theory of many *jīvas*, the reflection of the prototype is conditioned by the internal organs (*antaḥkaraṇa*) of individuals.[40]

The Nimbārkist does not accept this theory of reflection. He points out that the prototype face reflected in a mirror does not exist in the mirror. Similarly, the prototype, the consciousness of *īśvara*, does not pervade the reflection in the form of *jīva*-consciousness. However, if *īśvara*-consciousness does not pervade the *jīva*-consciousness, then the Upaniṣadic texts declaring that *īśvara* dwells in the inner self of the *jīvas* become meaningless.[41] There are many such Upaniṣadic texts stating, that *īśvara* is the inner self (*antaryāmi*) of *jīvas*.

(i) "*Eṣa te ātmā sarvāntara.*" (This is your self in all the *jīvas*. Bṛhad. Up. 3.4.)

(ii) "*Eṣa te ātmā antaryāmyamṛtam.*" (This is your self, knower of the inner self and immortal. Bṛhad. Up. 3.7.)

Moreover, the relation of the condition of nescience

with *jīva* which causes the reflection, cannot be either natural or due to an adjunct. If the relation is natural, then the *jīva* will forever be in bondage, inasmuch as nescience conditioned by the internal organ will always be with the *jīva*. If, however, the relation is due to an adjunct or condition, then it will lead to an infinite regress (as the second adjunct or condition will depend on the third adjunct or condition, and the third on the fourth and so on).

The Nimbārkist further points out that it is always the case that the prototype (*bimba*), for example, the face, is reflected on something having equal existential status with the prototype, for example, the mirror. As nescience does not have the same existential status as that of Brahman, Brahman cannot be said to be reflected in nescience. If it is argued that the prototype and the reflecting medium need not have equal existential status, then it would be possible for the sun to be reflected even in the illusory water of the mirage. But the sun is actually never seen to be reflected in the illusory water of the mirage.

Moreover, reflection is possible only in the case when the condition (*upādhi*) occupies a certain place. However, the condition can neither occupy a part of, or the whole of Brahman. If it is held to be in a part of Brahman, then Brahman can no longer be called partless and indeterminate (*nirviśeṣa*). Condition cannot be said to occupy the whole of the prototype. If the entire prototype is covered by the condition, then the prototype cannot be reflected in the condition. The boat can be reflected in water if it covers only a part of the water. A fully sunk boat is never reflected in water. Moreover, if the condition is related to the whole of Brahman, Brahman can no longer be said to be pure consciousness.

It follows from the above discussion that Brahman

conditioned by nescience (*avidyā*) cannot be the cause of the world.[42] It cannot be maintained either that God on which nescience is superimposed is the cause of the world, inasmuch as it is contradictory to say that omniscient God is the locus of *ajñāna*.[43]

Nirguṇa Brahman Cannot Be The Material Cause

The Nimbārkist points out that Brahman, as conceived by the Advaitin cannot be the material cause (*upādāna-kāraṇa*) of the world. According to the Advaitin, the world is an illusion, and the material cause of the world is nothing but the locus of the illusion (*bhramādhiṣṭhāna*) of the world. But the Nimbārkist points out that the true material of anything is never the locus of the illusory appearance of the thing. The true material of a clay pot is clay, and that clay is never considered to be the locus of the illusory appearance of that pot. The locus of the illusory appearance of silver is the nacre. And that nacre is never considered to be the material cause of silver.[44]

Nimbārka Refutation of *Vivartavāda*

The Advaitin considers two kinds of transformation (*rupāntara*). One is the real transformation known as *pariṇāma*. The other is the illusionary transformation known as *vivarta*. In both *pariṇāma* and *vivarta* there is a material which is transformed. The world is supposed by the Advaitin to be the *vivarta* or illusory transformation of Brahman.[45] Brahman is held to be the material cause of the illusory transformation. As a matter of fact, both Brahman and nescience (*ajñāna = avidyā*) are the material causes of the world of multiplicity. Brahman is held to be the material of the illusory transformation (*vivartopādānā*) and nescience is held to be the material which undergoes real transformation (*pariṇāmī-upādāna*) as the world. In the illusion of silver, nacre is the material of the

illusory transformation of it into silver, and the nescience regarding nacre is the material which undergoes real transformation as silver. In the Advaitin's opinion, thus, both Brahman and nescience are the materials of the world of multiplicity. The Nimbārkist, however, disagrees with the Advaitin on this point. He points out that if the world is an illusion, its material must also be unreal. Hence a real Brahman cannot be the material of the illusory world. If, however, real Brahman is held by the Advaitin to be the material cause of the multiple world, then he will be forced to admit the reality of the world.

The Nimbārkist thus points out the impossibility of the illusory transformation of a real Brahman. If the illusory transformation of a real entity is envisaged, then we need not look for an unreal entity as the cause of the production of an unreal illusion (as we do in the case of illusion of silver in nacre). If real Brahman is assumed to undergo illusory transformation, then a real entity must be acknowledged to forgo its essential nature. Furthermore, if a real entity assumes an unreal form, it must have the power (*yogyatā*) of assuming such a form. But Brahman, which is devoid of all powers according to the Advaitin, cannot have such a power. If It had such a power, then it would cease to be indeterminate (*nirviśeṣa*). [46]

The Advaitin may contend that, as a matter of fact, *māyā*, and not Brahman, is the material cause of the world-appearance. God is the efficient cause, and the pure indeterminate Brahman is the substratum of world-appearance. The Nimbārkist, however, argues that this contention is untenable, inasmuch as all schools of Vedānta, including Advaita Vedānta[47] hold that the material and efficient cause of the world are not different from each other. In Brahmasūtra 1.4.23 ("*Prakṛtiśca pratijñādṛṣṭāntānuparodhāt*.") Brahman is

said to be the material and efficient causes of the world. If the Advaitin holds *māyā* to be the material cause of the world, then his own view would contradict his own statement that Brahman is both the efficient and material cause of the world.[48]

Īśvara Conditioned By *Māyā* Not The Efficient Cause

The Nimbārkist points out that the Advaitin is not entitled to claim that *īśvara* is the efficient cause of the world. *Īśvara*, according to the Advaitin, is consciousness conditioned by *māyā*. Since *māyā* is the source of illusion, *īśvara* conditioned by *māyā* is subject to illusion. Such an *īśvara* cannot be supposed to be the omnipotent and omniscient creator of the universe and its all-pervading Lord. Neither can such an *īśvara* be said to be someone whose resolution to create and multiply Himself is inevitably fulfilled (*satyasaṃkalpa-puruṣa*).[49] The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* describes *māyā* as *prakṛti* and *īśvara* as the controller of the power of *māyā*.[50] Such a powerful controller cannot be said to be subject to the illusion created by *māyā*.

The Nimbārkist points out that the Advaitin's contention that *īśvara* is subject to the illusory power of *māyā*, and the world of multiplicity is an illusory projection (*āropa* = *adhyāsa*) in the locus of Brahman, is contradicted by the Upaniṣadic statement that Brahman observed, "I shall be many".[51] Nobody / nothing, the Nimbārkist points out, wilfully resolves to have in him / it that which is projected in him / it. The silver projected in nacre is not a wilful projection of the nacre. The Advaitin himself admits that the projection of the human body on *jīva* is not willed by *jīva* himself.[52]

Îśvara, The Creator, Is *Saguṇa*

The Nimbārkist concludes that *īśvara* Himself, who is the abode of infinite blessed qualities, who is omniscient and omnipotent, and who naturally (*svabhāvataḥ*) has such qualities and power, is the efficient and material cause of the world. In such a conclusion alone are the Upaniṣadic statements harmonised. Śaṃkarācārya himself in his commentary on B.S. 1.1.4 ("*Tattu samanvayāt*"), says that the harmony between different Upaniṣadic statements can be established by admitting that Brahman is omniscient and omnipotent, the cause of the creation, preservation and dissolution of the world. Śaṃkarācārya writes: "*Tad brahma sarvajñaṃ sarvaśakti jagadutpatti-sthiti-laya-kāraṇaṃ vedānta-śāstrādavagamyate. Kathaṃ Samanvayāt, sarveṣu vedānteṣu vākyāni tātparyenaitasyārthasya pratipādakatvena samanugatāni.*" (From the Vedāntaśāstras it is known that Brahman is omniscient, omnipotent cause of the origin, duration and dissolution of the world. Why? The reason is, the statements in all Vedāntas are harmonised in establishing the meanings of them in this way. Commentary on B.S. 1.1.4).

Even in his commentary on B.S. 1.1.2 ("*Janmādyasya yataḥ*") Śaṃkarācārya admits that the author of *Brahmasūtra* advises in this *sūtra* that Brahman is to be understood as omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent and eternal.

In his commentary on B.S. 1.2.2 ("*Vivakṣitaguṇo-papatteśca*"[53]) Śaṃkarācārya writes: the *Chāndogya* statement speaks of Brahman as having His resolutions necessarily fulfilled (*satyasaṃkalpa*). These qualities like *satyasaṃkalpatva* which make the possessor of these qualities worthy of worship, are well-established in Brahman. With regard to the *paramātman* (Brahman) Himself, qualities like *satyasaṃkalpatva* can be imagined. The reason is, that

paramātman has the unchallengeable power to create, preserve and dissolve. ("*Tadiha ye vivakṣitā guṇā upāsanāyāmupādeyatvenopadiṣṭāḥ satyasaṃkalpaprabhṛtayaḥ te parasmin brahmaṇyupapadyante. Satyasaṃkalpatvaṃ hi sṛṣṭi-sthiti-saṃhārairapratibandha-śaktitvāt paramātmano'vakalpyate.*" (Commentary on B.S. 1.1.2).

In this context Śaṃkarācārya speaks of the qualities of Brahman as *satyasaṃkalpatva* in no uncertain terms. In his commentary on B.S. 1.2.4 Śaṃkarācārya speaks of *paramātman* as being the object to which *jīva*'s religious activities are directed. *Paramātman* is worshipped and finally attained by *jīvas*. ("*Sārirasya kartṛtvenopāsakatvena vyapadeśāt, paramātmanaḥ karmatvenopāsyatvena prāpyatvena ca vyapadeśāt.*" Commentary on B.S. 1.2.4). In this context Śaṃkarācārya describes Brahman as qualified by *upāsyatva* (worshipability) and *prāpyatva* (attainability by the worshipper).

It must thus be admitted, the Nimbārkist points out, that the Upaniṣads and the author of *Brahmasūtra* do not not intend to establish Brahman as purely *nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa*, and devoid of all powers. And Śaṃkarācārya's own comments contradict his opinion that Brahman is *nirguṇa, nirviśeṣa* and devoid of powers.

G

Rejection Of The Distinction Between *Saguṇa* And *Nirguṇa* Brahman

Śaṃkarācārya, however, maintains that the qualities pointed out above are applicable to *īśvara* qualified by *māyā*. Imagination, prompted by nescience (*ajñāna*), projects these qualities on attributeless Brahman. *Īśvara*, who has qualities of an omniscient and omnipotent creator, is really a product of *māyā*. Brahman, on the other hand, Śaṃkarācārya says, is to

be understood as without any form and as indeterminate — and not contrariwise. All the statements stating the essence of Brahman describe It as being beyond words, beyond touch, beyond form, and beyond decay and change. In all these, Brahman is described as devoid of all specificity. ("*Samastaviśeṣa-rahitaṃ nirvikalpakameva brahma pratipattavyaṃ na tadvīparītam. Sarvatra hi brahmasvarūpa-pratipādanapareṣu vākyeṣu 'aśabdamasparśam-arūpam-avyayam' ityevamādiṣvapāstasamasta-viśeṣameva brahmopadiśyate.*" Commentary on B.S. 3.2.11).

Śaṃkarācārya points out that the Kaṭhopaniṣadic statement like, Brahman is 'beyond words, beyond touch, beyond form and beyond decay' ('*aśabdamasparśa-marūpamavyayam*', Kaṭha. Up. 1.3.15) is expressive of Brahman's essence (*svarūpa*); and Upaniṣadic statements like, 'Who is omniscient' ('*Yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvavit*'), 'That from which all these are born' ('*Yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante*') are not expressive of Brahman's essence. Yet, the Nimbārkist does not agree with Śaṃkarācārya on this point. He says that neither the Upaniṣads nor the *Brahmasūtra* make such a distinction between statements expressing the essential and those expressing the non-essential nature of Brahman. The author of *Brahmasūtra*, in B.S. 1.1.2 ('*Janmādyasya yataḥ*') clearly indicates that Brahman has the quality of creatorship. Moreover, since the Upaniṣadic statements are of equal strength, one of them should not be treated as the main (*pradhāna*) statement, conveying a primary (*mukhya*) meaning, and the other as a subsidiary (*apradhāna*) statement, conveying the secondary (*gauṇa*) meaning. Śaṃkarācārya himself admits that it should not be thought that some of the *Śruti* statements have (primary) meaning and some do not have that meaning. The reason is, there is no difference between them as the source of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*). ("*Na hi vedavākyānāṃ*

kasyacidanarthavattvaṃ kasyacidarthavattvamiti yuktaṃ pratipattuṃ, pramāṇatvāviśeṣāt." Commentary on B.S. 3.2.15). Moreover, Śaṃkarācārya himself, in his commentary on the *sūtra*, '*Janmādyasya yataḥ*', does not indicate that being the creator of the world is not Brahman's essential attribute (*svarūpalakṣaṇa*). On the contrary, he says that since Brahman is indicated here as the cause of the world, it is implied that such a Brahman is omniscient. ("*Jagatkāraṇapradarśanena sarvajñaṃ brahmety-upakṣiptam.*" Commentary on B.S. 1.1.2.[54]). Hence, Śaṃkarācārya's claim (in his commentary on B.S. 3.2.11) that Brahman is *nirviśeṣa* and *nirvikalpaka*, goes against his earlier statement in his commentary on B.S. 1.1.2.

Śaṃkarācārya's view that *īśvara* or qualified Brahman is due to the projection of illusory *māyā*, and is thus due to the projection of nescience on attributeless Brahman, and hence a product of imagination is not corroborated either on the basis of Vedic and Upaniṣadic sayings or on that of the *Brahmasūtra*.

The Advaitin may contend that the Upaniṣadic saying, '*Māyāntu prakṛtiṃ vidyānmāyinantu maheśvaram*"[55], can be interpreted as conveying the truth that *īśvara* is conditioned by *māyā*. The Nimbārkist, however, objects to such an interpretation. The word, '*māyī*', really signifies the fact that Brahman is the controller of His power of *māyā* by which He creates the world. If *īśvara* is conditioned by and subject to *māyā's* illusory power, then the words, '*maheśvara* is *māyī*' become meaningless.

There is no Vedic or Upaniṣadic statement proving the fact that *īśvara* is imagined by nescience. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (as we noted on p. 38) tells us that omniscience and omnipotence are the natural qualities of Brahman.[56] But omniscience and omnipotence cannot be the natural qualities of *īśvara* who is conditioned by *māyā*. What is produced by

māyā is adventitious; it can never be natural. The Vedic and Upaniṣadic statements describe *māyā* as the creative power of Brahman. *Māyā* has never been described in such statements to be an illusory false appearance.

The Upaniṣads contain some statements describing Brahman as attributeless and some others describing the same as qualified. Thus Brahman has to be understood as being both *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa* (in different senses). Śaṃkarācārya, however, is of the opinion that the distinction between a *saguṇa* and a *nirguṇa* Brahman is based on the distinction between *vidyā* (knowledge) and *avidyā* (ignorance). The wise (*vidvān*) knows Brahman to be *nirguṇa*, inactive and one. The ignorant (*avidvān*) however, knows Brahman to be *saguṇa* and many. All this is evident from the following commentary of Śaṃkarācārya:

"*Dvirūpaṃ hi brahmāvagamyate, nāmarūpa-vikāra-bhedo-pādhi-viśiṣtaṃ, tad-viparītaṃ ca sarvo-pādhi-vivarjitam . . . . iti caivaṃ sahasraśo vidyāvidyāviṣayabhedena brahmaṇo darśayanti vākyāni*." (Brahman is to be understood in two ways: as having different names and forms, as having transformations, as being characterised by different conditions, and as being the opposite of all these, as being devoid of all conditions . . . . In this way, there are thousands of statements which show that based on the differences in objects of wisdom and ignorance, Brahman is conceived in different ways. Commentary on B.S. 1.1.11).

The Nimbārkist, however, does not agree with Śaṃkarācārya's opinion. The distinction between *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa* is not, he says, based on the distinction between *vidyā* and *avidyā*. There is no textual evidence in support of Śaṃkarācārya's opinion. According to the Nimbārkist, the statement that Brahman judged, 'I shall be many' ('*Ahaṃ vahu*

syāṃ prajāyeya'), has been made expressing the essence of Brahman. Knowledge that this manifold world is different from and independent of Brahman, is a product of *avidyā*. Knowledge that this manifold world is a manifestation of Brahman (i.e., knowledge of identity in difference) stems from *vidyā*. One who knows Brahman sees the manifold things and beings in this world to be diverse forms of the identical Brahman. This is what is expressed in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* statement: "*Brahma... sarvamabhavat. Tad yo yo devānāṃ pratyabuddhyata sa eva tadabhavat. Tatharṣīnāṃ, tathā manuṣyāṇāṃ. Tadvaitat paśyanṛṣirvāmadevaḥ pratipede'haṃ manurabhavaṃ sūryaśceti. Tadidamapyetarhi ya evaṃ vedāhaṃ brahmāsmīti, sa idaṃ sarvaṃ bhavati.*" [Brahman became (took the form of) all this (perceived world). Those among the deities who possess the knowledge (that 'I am Brahman') became all this. Likewise, those among the *ṛṣis* (hermits) and men who are possessed of the knowledge (that 'I am Brahman'), they become all this. Accordingly, since the venerable Vāmadeva was possessed of this knowledge of Brahman, he said: 'I was Manu, I was the sun'. Even now, those who know themselves as Brahman, become (non-different from) all this. Bṛhad. Up. 1. Brāhmaṇa 4.]

In this way the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* shows that the wise one knows himself and worldly beings as Brahman. Hence, seeing the identical Brahman in many forms is not *avidyā*. It is really *vidyā*. Failure to see the manifold things and beings as varied forms of the same Brahman, and knowing the manifold to be different from Brahman is *avidyā*. The Upaniṣads do not describe the perceived manifold as false appearances. The perceived manifold is included in Brahman's essence. If one who knows Brahman does not perceive the worldly manifold as different forms of Brahman, then why did the venerable Vāmadeva, who had knowledge of Brahman, is stated

in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* as saying that Manu, the sun *et al* are all Brahman? Thus the Upaniṣadic descriptions of Brahman as *saguṇa* are not to be taken as products of ignorance. Brahman is really both *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*. Thus the Advaita view that the Upaniṣadic statements describing Brahman as *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa* are based on the distinction between *vidyā* and *avidyā*, is not considered by the Nimbārkist to be a proper one.

H

Nimbārka View That Brahman Is *Ānandamaya*

The Nimbārkist opines that Brahman is both *ānandamaya* (full of delight / bliss) and *ānandasvarūpa* (having delight / bliss as His essence). His opinion is based on certain texts found in the Upaniṣads, Smṛtis and *Brahmasūtra*. In his opinion the author of *Brahmasūtra*, in *sūtras* 1.1.13 ("*Ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt*"[57]) to *sūtra* 1.1.20 ("*Asminnasya tadyoge śāsti*"[58]) indicates that Brahman is both *ānandamaya* and *ānandasvarūpa*. In his commentary on these *sūtras*, Śaṃkarācārya, however, first interprets Brahman as *ānandamaya*. But, later on, he argues that the word, '*ānandamaya*' refers here not to Brahman, but to the *jīva*. Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa and Swami Santadas elaborately criticise Śaṃkarācārya's view, and establish that Brahman Himself, and not *jīva*, is *ānandamaya*.

i

Rejection Of The Advaita View That Brahman Is Not *Ānandamaya*

Commenting on the *sūtra*, '*Ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt*', Śaṃkarācārya says that Brahman cannot be *ānandamaya*. The

word '*ānandamaya*' has not been repeatedly used in the Upaniṣads referring to Brahman. The word that has been repeatedly used in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, referring to Brahman is, '*ānanda*' (delight / bliss). For example in the Brahmānandavallī, 7th *anuvāk* of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* it is said: "*Raso vai saḥ, rasaṃ hyevāyaṃ labdhvānandībhavati.*" (He is bliss; by attaining the bliss one becomes blissful). The third *vallī*, 6th *anuvāka* states: "*Ānando brahmeti vyajanāt*". (Since Brahman has been known as bliss.) In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, 2.9, it is further stated: "*Ānandaṃ brahmaṇo vidvān na vibheti kutaścana.*" (One who knows the bliss of Brahman is not afraid of anything.)

Referring to Śaṃkarācārya's opinion Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa says that the word, '*ānanda*', which is used in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, referring to Brahman, is really to be interpreted as '*ānandamaya*'. The injunction, '*Vasante vasante jyotiṣā yajeta*' really means, '*Vasante vasante jyotiṣṭomena yajeta*'. (One should practice *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifice in every spring.) Similarly, the word, '*ānanda*' as used in the Upaniṣadic statement should be interpreted to mean '*ānandamaya*'. He argues that *ānanda* as a quality cannot be understood without its reference to the qualified one, the *ānandamaya*, of which it is a quality. Hence the word, '*ānanda*' referring to Brahman is really to be understood as meaning (by implication) '*ānandamaya*' (one who is full of bliss)[59]

It should also be noted that the word, '*ānandamaya*' can be interpreted as meaning the 'plenitude (*prācurya*) of *ānanda*'. It stands for infinite (*aparisīma*) bliss. Hence, the Nimbārkist urges, by the repeated use of the word, '*ānanda*', the plenitude of *ānanda* has been indicated in the Upaniṣadic texts. Hence, the repeated use of the word, '*ānanda*', has to be interpreted as referring to the *ānandamaya*. And the *ānandamaya*, which the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* speaks of, is really

Brahman.

Actually, the Nimbārkist points out, it is not the case that there is no repeated use of the word, '*ānandamaya*' in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. The nature of *ānandamaya* is analysed in the 5th *anuvāk* of Brahmānandavallī of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. It is said there: "*Etastmād vijñānamayādanyo'ntara ātmānandamayaḥ.*"[60]

After describing in the 6th *anuvāk* of Brahmānandavallī that Brahman manifested Himself in the form of the world, it is said in the 7th *anuvāk*: "*Raso vai saḥ, rasaṃ hyevāyaṃ labdhvānandī bhavati.*" [He is of the essence of *rasa* (*ānanda*). Having attained Him, *jīva* obtains inexhaustible *ānanda*.][61]

The next 8th *anuvāk* shows that the bliss in Brahman (*brahmānanda*) is the greatest of all forms of bliss. It is stated in that *anuvāk* that the wise, after departing from the body, leaves this world and first takes recourse to the *annamaya*[62] -*ātman*. Next he takes recourse to *prāṇamaya*[63]-*ātman*, and then to the *manomaya*[64] -*ātman*. From the *manomaya-ātman* the wise goes to *vijñānamaya*[65]-*ātman*. Lastly, the wise enters into *ānandamaya-ātman*. ("*Ānandamayamātmānamupasaṃkrāmati*".). It is thus clear that not only the word, '*ānanda*', but also the word, '*ānandamaya*', have been quoted repeatedly with regard to Brahman in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*.

In the same context the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* adds the following comments:

(i) "*Yato vācā nivarttante aprāpya manasā saha*".

(ii) "*Ānandaṃ brahmaṇo vidvān na vibheti kutaścana*".

[(i) That by not obtaining which words along with the mind recoil. (ii) By knowing the *ānanda* of Brahman one becomes fearless.]

It is thus obvious that *ānanda* is that quality of *ānandamaya* Brahman the knowledge of which enables one to be fearless. Hence, Brahman is the last destination of the journey of the wise. The attainment of *ānandamaya* Brahman is *mokṣa* (liberation), inasmuch as by attaining *mokṣa* one is free from the shackles of bondage in the form of fear etc.

Śaṃkarācārya, however, points out that the statement, 'The wise enters into the *ānandamaya-ātman*', does not indicate that the attainment of *ānandamaya* is the final destination of the wise. *Ānandamaya*, in his opinion, does not refer to Brahman. It refers to *jīva*. The final destination of the wise is not thus the *ānandamaya*, the *jīva*, it is Brahman. In support of his view he refers to the text of the 5th *anuvāk* where it is said: "*Ānanda ātma. Brahma puccham pratiṣṭhā.*" Śaṃkarācārya says that the text clearly indicates that Brahman is the tail (*puccha*) on which the *ānandamaya* self is established (*pratiṣṭhita*). Brahman is the locus (*pratiṣṭhā*) of the *ānandamaya* self. Just as the bird is established (*pratiṣṭhita)* on its tail, similarly *ānandamaya* is established on its locus, Brahman. By attaining the *ānandamaya* self one also reaches the locus, Brahman, on which it is established.

Swami Santadas, however, is of the opinion that Śaṃkarācārya's view quoted above is utterly unjustified. In Śaṃkarācārya's opinion the *ānandamaya-jīva is a transformed (vikārī)* effect. Such a *jīva* is *saguṇa*. Brahman, however, as Śaṃkarācārya shows, is *nirguṇa*. How can it then be maintained that through the attainment of the transformed, *saguṇa-jīva*, one can finally attain Brahman which is beyond transformation and *nirguṇa*? Hence, since the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* states that the *ānandamaya* stage is the stage where the wise attains *mokṣa*, there is no doubt that '*ānandamaya*' refers to Brahman. [66]

Śaṃkarācārya presents another argument showing that

'*ānandamaya*' does not refer to Brahman. As shown above, the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* describes the *ānandamaya* stage as the last one in a series, starting with the *annamaya* stage. The word, '*annamaya*', has been formed by adding the suffix '*mayat*' to the stem, '*anna*'. Here the suffix '*mayat*' has been used in the sense of a transformation (*vikāra*). '*Annamaya*' refers to the fact that living beings are born out of and nourished by food. Hence they can be said to be transformed effects (*vikāra*) of food. Hence, being mentioned as the last member of the series of transformed effects, '*ānandamaya*' signifies a transformed stage (*vikāra*) of something, Since *ānandamaya* is a transformed effect, it cannot be used to indicate Brahman, which is beyond transformation.

Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa does not agree with Śaṃkarācārya. He points out that the word, '*annamaya*' can be admitted to signify a transformed being. However, words like '*prāṇamaya*', '*vijñānamaya*', '*manomaya*' cannot sensibly be taken as signifying transformed beings. (What can be meant by the words, 'transformation of life / mind' etc?) Hence , '*ānandamaya*' does not refer to any transformed *jīva*, as Śaṃkarācārya thinks. The suffix '*mayat*' has been used here, not to indicate any transformation, but to indicate plenitude / abundance (*prācurya*). (*Ānandamaya* here signifies Brahman, who has abundant bliss.) Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa further points out that, if Śaṃkarācārya intends to argue that '*ānandamaya*' refers to a transformed individual self (*jīva*), then he is totally mistaken. *Jīva* does not undergo any transformation. This is proved from the Upaniṣadic statements: (i) "*Na jāyate mriyate vā*", (ii) "*Na hi vijñāturvijñāterviparilopo vidyate 'vināśitvāt*". [(i) The individual soul is not born, nor does it die. (Kaṭha. Up. 2.17), (ii) Since the knower soul is undecaying, his knowledge / consciousness never disappears. (Bṛhad. Up. 4.3.)]

ii

Further Arguments Denying Brahman As Ānandamaya And Nimbārka Defence

Śaṃkarācārya is aware of the fact that in Brahmasūtra 1.1.14, '*Vikāraśabdānneti cenna, prācuryāt*', it is stated that the word '*ānandamaya*' refers to one who has an abundance (*prācurya*) of *ānanda*; and the suffix '*mayat*' has not been used here to indicate any transformed state (*vikāra*). Yet he contends that the word, '*pracura*' means, 'a lot', 'plenty'. But when it is said that there is a lot of *ānanda*, plenty of *ānanda* in someone, it is implied that he / she also has a little amount of *duḥkha* (suffering). However, Brahman is devoid of any *duḥkha* whatsoever. Hence, '*ānandamaya*' cannot be said to refer to Brahman.

Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa, however, does not agree with Śaṃkarācārya's view. He says that the word, '*pracura*' has indeed a relative meaning. It is used in comparison with the adjective, '*alpa*' (a little). But it is not necessarily the case that the *alpatva* (littleness) must reside in the same locus with what has '*prācurya*' (abundance). The sun is said to have an abundance of illumination (*pracuraprakāśaḥ sūryaḥ*) in comparison to the lesser amount of illumination in the moon. Thus a lesser amount of illumination is present in the moon. And a comparatively greater amount of illumination is in the sun. The 'greater' and 'less' do not have the same locus. The abundance of *ānanda* in Brahman surpasses the *ānanda* one derives from worldly enjoyment. Thus one should not mix up the *ānanda* of Brahman which is unmixed and limitless with the *ānanda* derived from worldly enjoyment which co-exists with *duḥkha* and is limited. In this way, Brahman has no trace of *duḥkha* in Him.[67]

Swami Santadas also disagrees with Śaṃkarācārya. He

says that abundant *ānanda* (*pracūra-ānanda*) really implies absence of *duḥkha*. '*Annamaya-yajña*' signifies a sacrifice in which there is no dearth of food. Whatever amount of food is needed is present in that sacrifice. Similarly, '*ānandamaya-brahma*' signifies Brahman in whom there is no dearth of *ānanda*. Whatever amount of *ānanda* is needed is present in Brahman. Brahman is full of *ānanda*; there is no trace of *duḥkha* in Him. Swami Santadas refers, in this context, to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*'s statement: "*Yo vai bhūmā tat sukhaṃ, nālpe sukhamasti, bhūmaiva sukham*." (That which is *bhūmā*, the greatest, the infinite, that is happiness. There is no happiness in what is little. '*Bhūmā*' alone is happiness. Chānd. Up. 7.23.1.) There is no happiness in what is limited, what is little (*alpa*). Infinite happiness alone is true happiness. Since Brahman is infinite, His *ānanda* is also infinite. Otherwise, that *ānanda* cannot be said to be *pracura* (abundant). Words like '*bhūmā*' (the greatest) and '*pracura*' are thus similar in meaning. Just as one does not apprehend the existence of anything small in the greatest, so one does not apprehend the existence of a little amount of something else in what is abundant. (There is no possibility of a little amount of *duḥkha* in Brahman, who is abundantly blissful.)[68]

Śaṃkarācārya says that referring to the *ānandamaya* self, the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* states: "*Tasya priyameva śiraḥ*". [*Priya* (happiness / rejoice) is his head. Brahmānandavallī, 5th anuvāk.] Since the *ānandamaya* self is said to have a head, Śaṃkarācārya argues, he must be said to be a whole (*avayavī*) of parts (*avayavas*), and a qualified (*saguṇa*) being. But Brahman is *nirguṇa*. It is said to be that from which the words along with the mind recoil. Hence *nirguṇa* Brahman cannot be said to be *ānandamaya*. Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa, however, argues that the forms of happiness, referred to by words like '*priya*', '*moda*', '*pramoda*' are parts of *ānandamaya* Brahman. The

Upaniṣadic saying, "*Etasyaivā- nandasyānyāni bhūtāni mātrāmupajīvanti*", implies that the other aspects of this *ānanda* are its dimensions by which *jīvas* live. There is no contradiction in saying, that *priya*, *moda* etc. are parts of *ānandamaya* Brahman. Parts and the whole are related by the relation of *bhedābheda* (identity-cum-difference). Thus *ānandamaya* Brahman has *priya*, *moda*, *ānanda* (which are really synonymous) as His parts or aspects.[69]

Swami Santadas says that although *priya*, *moda*, *pramoda* have been spoken of in this context as parts (*avayavas*) of Brahman, yet they are not to be understood as perceivable parts of the body (viz. literally as the head, the wings etc.). That the essence of Brahman is full of incessant (*niravacchinna*) bliss, is what is signified by the use of various synonymous words like '*priya*'. '*pramoda*', '*ānanda*' referring to Brahman. Although *priya*, *pramoda, ānanda* are spoken of as different parts of Brahman, like His head, wings etc. in the Brahmānandavallī of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, yet they are not to be taken literally as perceivable parts of His body. They are to be taken in a symbolic sense as aspects of Brahman. From Brahmasūtra 3.3.14[70] we come to learn that although *priya* has been described as Brahman's head, *moda* has been described as his right wing, yet these descriptions are not to be taken in their literal meanings. *Priya*, *moda* etc. have been imagined to be different parts of Brahman for the sake of the convenience of meditation on Brahman. Thus the aforesaid descriptions do not, in any way, suffer from the defect of converting Brahman into a limited, perceivable being.[71]

Śaṃkarācārya's objection that if Brahman is supposed to have *priya* as its head, then Brahman would have to be understood as *saguṇa* is met by the Nimbārkist by arguing that Brahman is indeed *saguṇa*. The conception of Brahman as *saguṇa* may be a mistaken conception as far as the Advaita

position is concerned. But such a conception is a proper one as far as the Nimbārka viewpoint is concerned.

Śaṃkarācārya opines that Brahman must be considered to be *nirguṇa* since the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* contends that Brahman is that from which the words along with the mind recoil (see p. 70). Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa however argues that the statement, "*Yato vācā nivarttante aprāpya manasā saha*", does not establish that Brahman is *nirguṇa*. It only signifies that the qualities of Brahman like *ānanda* cannot be said to be limited like earthly things, which can be known by a limited mind. Alternatively, the statement, "*yato vācā nivarttante . . .*" can be said to signify the fact that Brahman cannot be known by a mind that is polluted by desire, hatred etc. A man with such a mind cannot even properly understand the words stating the essence of Brahman. If Brahman were *nirguṇa* and completely unknown then the above *Taittirīya* statement cannot be followed by the words, "*Ānandaṃ Brahmaṇo vidvān na vibheti kutaścana*" (see p. 70). Here it is clearly indicated that Brahman is qualified by *ānanda*, and that *ānanda* of Brahman is known. (Brahman is known by a mind which is properly purified by meditation).

Śaṃkarācārya says that the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, in the context of describing *ānandamaya-ātman*, describes *ānanda* as its *ātman* and Brahman as its tail and locus ("*Ānanda ātmā brahmapucchaṃ pratiṣṭhā.*"). Just as the bird establishes itself on its tail, similarly *ānandamaya-ātman* is established on its locus, Brahman. Thus Brahman, Śaṃkarācārya maintains, is over and above *ānaṇdamaya-ātman*; it is not itself *ānandamaya*. Swami Santadas, however, does not endorse Śaṃkarācārya's conclusion. He says that the words, '*puccham pratiṣṭhā*' follow '*manomaya*' stages etc. '*Puccha*' (tail) is that on which the body of the bird rests (is established). However, the tail is included

in the body. It is not over and above the body. Just as in the '*annamaya*' and '*prāṇmaya*' and other stages, the tail, which is the locus of these stages, is not over and above the body, in the same way, Brahman, the locus of the *ānandamaya* stage is not over and above the *ānandamaya*. Being the locus (*āśraya* = *pratiṣṭhā*) of the *ānandamaya* stage, Brahman does not transcend the *ānandamaya*. He Himself is *ānandamaya* and *ānanda* is His quality.[72]

I

Brahman's Forms (*Rūpas*) And Manifestations (Embodiments)

According to the Nimbārkist, Brahman has an illuminated (*jyotirmaya*) form. He is illumination itself (*jyotiḥ-svarūpa*). In support of his conception he quotes the following Upaniṣadic statements and the *sūtras* of *Brahmasūtra*:

(i) "*Hiraṇmaye pare kośe virajaṃ brahma niṣkalam. Tacchubhraṃ jyotiṣāṃ jyotistad yadātmavido viduḥ.*" (Transcending the *hiraṇmaya* sheath is the partless pure Brahman. Knowers of self know Him as white, as the illumination of the illumined. Mund. Up. 2.2.9.); (ii) "*Tameva bhāntamanubhāti sarvam. Tasya bhāṣā sarvamidaṃ vibhāti.*" (Following His illumination all else is illuminated. His light / lustre brightens up all this. Kaṭha. Up. 2.2.10, Śveta. Up. 6.14, Mund. Up. 2.2.10.); (iii) "*Suvarṇajyotiḥ.*" (He is of the lustre of gold. Tait. Up. 3.10.6); (iv) "*Bhārūpaḥ*". (He is of the form of illumination. Chānd. Up. 3.14.2); (v) "*Jyotiścaraṇābhidhānāt*" [Brahman is illumination, all beings are said to constitute one of His aspects (*caraṇa* = *pāda*). B.S. 1.1.25]; (vi) "*Jyotirdarśannāt*". (Because the characteristic of illumination has been spoken of Him. B.S. 1.3.41).

The Nimbārkist also speaks of an illuminated form of

Brahman as a perfect person (*virāṭa-puruṣa*). He says that the Upaniṣads speak of the illumined personified form (*rūpa = mūrti*) of Brahman. Thus the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* says: "*Yadā paśyaḥ paśyati rukmavarṇaṃ kartāramīśaṃ puruṣaṃ brahmayonim*." (When the seer sees the brightly illumined divine Person, creator of the world, creator of Hiraṇyagarbha Brahmā. Mund. Up. 3.1.3.) The *Śvetaśvatara Upaniṣad* says: "*Vedāhametat puruṣaṃ mahāntamādityavarṇaṃ tamasaḥ parastāt*." (I have known the Great Person who has the colour of the sun, and is beyond darkness. Śvet. Up. 3.8.)[73]

The Nimbārkist says that other descriptions of the perfect great Person is to be found in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: "*Tasya haitasya puruṣasya rūpaṃ yathā māhārajanaṃ vāso, yathā pāṇḍvāvikaṃ, yathendragopo yathā'gnyarcciryathā puṇḍarīkaṃ, sakṛdvidyuttaṃ, sakṛdvidyuttve ha vāsya śrīrbhavati ya evaṃ veda*." (The colour of that Person is yellowish like a piece of cloth dyed with turmeric; greyish like a woollen cloth, reddish like an insect called *indra-gopa*, bright like the flame of fire. He has the pleasant colour of a lotus; the brightly illumined colour of lightnings. The person who has known Him thus, also acquires the beauty of a collection of lightnings. Bṛhad. Up. 2.3.6).

In addition to this, the Nimbārkist adds, Brahman also has an unmanifest form called *amūrta-svarūpa*. This *amūrta-svarūpa* has been described as:

(i) "*Tadakṣaraṃ gārgi brahmaṇābhivadanti asthūlamanaṇu, ahrasvamadīrgham*." (O Gārgi, the unchanging Brahman is spoken of as being neither gross, nor atomic, neither short nor long. Bṛhad. Up. 3.8.8.)

(ii) "*Divyo hyamūrtaḥ puruṣaḥ*." (The Great Person is divine and unmanifest. Muṇḍ, Up. 2.1.2)

(iii) "*Aśabdamasparśamarūpamavyam.*" (Brahman is beyond words, beyond touch, beyond form, beyond change and decay. Kaṭha. Up. 9.3.15[74])

Thus, on the basis of the Upaniṣads, it has to be admitted that Brahman has both a manifest (*mūrta*) and an unmanifest (*amūrta*) form. The Nimbārkist points out that *Viṣṇupurāṇa* specifically points out the *mūrta* and *amūrta* forms of Brahman:

"*Āsrayaścetaso brahma dvidhā tacca svabhāvataḥ /*
Bhūpa mūrtañcāmūrtañca parañcāpareameva ca //

Visṇupurāṇa, 7.47

[O king, Brahman is the locus of the mind (the object of meditation). Brahman has two natural forms: *amūrta* (unmanifest) and *mūṛta* (manifest), *para* (the highest) and *apara* (lower).] It is to be understood here that *amūrta-rūpa* of Brahman is of two sorts, viz. *para-amūrta* and *apara-amūrta-rūpa*; and the *mūrta-rūpa* is also of two sorts, viz. *para-mūrta* and *apara-mūrta-rūpa*.

i

Para-amūrta-rūpa Of Brahman

The *para-amūrta-rūpa* of Brahman is spoken of as *akṣara* (changeless).[75] In this form Brahman is *nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa*. This Brahman can be referred to only as *sat* (existent). It can only be said that *akṣara* Brahman is existent. Yet, *akṣara* Brahman is possessed of all powers in their latent forms.

ii

Apara-amūrta-rūpa Of Brahman

The *apara-amūrta-rūpa* of Brahman is the omniscient and omnipotent creator known as *īśvara.*[76] *Īśvara* is

saccidānanda (existent, conscious and blissful). Although *īśvara* is *saguṇa* (qualified), yet He does not have a sensible specific form. Nor does He have any part. He is thus neither *sākāra* nor *sāvayava*. He creates (manifests) the world with the help of His specific powers. He is over and above the created world (*jagadatīta*).

iii

Para-mūrta-rūpa Of Brahman

The consciousness (*cit*) which is established in the whole cosmos, and which is referred to as '*mahāvirāt*' (the great and vast) is the first manifest (*mūrta*) form of Brahman. In this form Brahman is referred to as '*hiraṇyagarbha*' in the Vedas and Upaniṣads. This *hiraṇyagarbha* is referred to as '*anantadeva*' in the Purāṇas.

In the third chapter of the first *skandha* of *Śrimadbhāgavata*, this *para-mūrta* Brahman has been described as the undecaying seed (*bījamavyayam*) of all that incarnates from Him. He is the source (*nidāna*) of all incarnations. The different incarnations such as deities, animals, birds and men are created by His parts:

> "*Etannānāvatārāṇāṃ nidānaṃ bījamavyayam /*
> *Yasyāṃśāṃśena sṛjyante devatiryaṅarādayaḥ //*

Swami Santadas says that in addition to what is mentioned above, there is another *para-mūrta-rūpa* of Brahman. He says that in order to help devotees, *amūrta* Brahman expresses Himself as the object of meditation. He then manifests Himself as the Lord of *golaka*, Śrīkṛṣṇa. Although possessed of many forms, His form as Śrīkṛṣṇa, the Lord of *golaka*, is his best manifest form. Śrīkṛṣṇa resides in *vaikunṭha* as Nārāyaṇa. Again, it is He, who is known as Mahādeva / Maheśa in Kailāśa. All these are specific manifest

forms of Brahman, meditated on by the devotees, in accordance with their spiritual capacity. Meditators are possessed of different spiritual capacities in accordance with their progress in the process of meditation they undertake.[77]

iv

Apara-mūrta-rūpa Of Brahman

The entire world and the collection of *jīvas*, which are parts of Brahman, constitute the *apara-mūrta-rūpa* of Brahman. That *jīva* and *jagat* are the manifest forms of the infinite Brahman is stated in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: "*Dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe mūrtañcaivāmūrtañca, martyañcāmṛtañca, sthitañca, yacca, sacca, tyacca.*" [Two indeed are Brahman's forms. One is the manifest (gross), the other is unmanifest (subtle). One is mortal (decaying), the other is immortal. One is stationary, the other is mobile. One is existent in a specific form (*yat*). The other is not specific (*sat*) and indescribable (*tyat*). Bṛhad. Up. 2.3.1.]

That this *apara-mūrta-rūpa* of Brahman consists of the *jīva-jagat* is evident from the fact that earth, water and fire are, in the next statement of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (2.3.2), referred to as the *apara-mūrta-rūpa* of Brahman. They have been described as *martya* (*mortal*), *sthita* (stationary) and having a specific form. In the third statement of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (2.3.3) air and ether have been stated to be the aforesaid *apara-amūrta-rūpa*[78] of Brahman. These have been described as immortal, mobile and not of any specific form.

From the above discussion, the Nimbārkist points out, it follows that Brahman has both manifest and unmanifest forms.

Incidentally, it is to be noted here that the Nimbārkist also says that the one identical *īśvara*, for the sake of sport,

expresses Himself in four forms of Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa Pradyumna and Aniruḍdha.

The Four Divine Emanations (*Vyuha*) of Brahman

According to Nimbārkācārya, Brahman has four divine emanations. Vāsudeva is the eternal supreme self. He is *īśvara*. Vāsudeva Himself becomes Saṃkarṣaṇa, the inner controller of the individual souls. He animates the embodied souls (*jīvātman*). Saṃkarṣaṇa Himself becomes Pradyumna during dissolution (*pralaya*), and controls the mind of *jīvas* whose subtle bodies are not destroyed at dissolution. Aniruddha emanates from Pradyumna and controls the causes and effects.[79] According to another interpretation, Saṃkarṣaṇa is the controller of Prakṛti with twenty three evolutes. Other interpreters, however, are of the opinion that Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha are symbolic in their meaning. They really stand for *jīva*, *manas* / *prajñā* (mind / wisdom) and *ahaṃkāra* (egoism).[80]

Śaṃkarācārya, in his commentary on *sūtra* 2.2.42 of *Brahmasūtra* ("*Utpattya-sambhavāt*")[81] criticises the theory of four *vyuhas* (the theory first established in the Pāñcarātra literature). Rāmānujācārya in his *Śrībhāṣya* refutes Śaṃkarācārya's criticism and establishes the theory of four *vyuhas*. Nimbārkācārya and his disciple Śrīnivāsācārya, in their commentaries on this particular *sūtra*, interpret it as rejecting the view that *jīva* and *jagat* originate from *śakti* (power) without any *puruṣa* (Personified Being) as being the locus of such a *śakti*. Nimbārkācārya does not refer here either to the theory of four *vyuhas* or to Śaṃkarācārya's rejection of it. However, Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa in *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā* rejects Śaṃkarācārya's criticism of four *vyuhas* and tries to establish the Pāñcarātra view of four *vyuhas*.[82]

J

Nimbārka View of Direct Intuition of Brahman

The Nimbārkist recognizes only three *pramāṇas* (sources of valid cognition): *pratyakṣa* (perception), *anumāna* (inference) and *śabda* (verbal testimony). In his opinion Brahman cannot be known by *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*. He opines that Brahman can be known by direct intuition with the help of Vedic and Upaniṣadic statements. Let us first try to understand why the Nimbārkist thinks that Brahman cannot be known by *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*.

Brahman Is Not The Object Of *Pratyakṣa* And *Anumāna*

Brahman is supersensible. He is bereft of empirical qualities and actions. He is not the member of any class. *Pratyakṣa* of an object is possible only if it has these qualities and actions, and can be classified in a certain way. Hence, Brahman cannot be an object of *pratyakṣa*. It may be said that Brahman, being all pervasive, is present in the *indriyas* (sense organs). Hence, since the *indriyas* are *sannikṛṣṭa* (connected) with Brahman, Brahman may be an object of *pratyakṣa*. The Nimbārkist points out that the *indriyas* are all revealed by Brahman. And that which is revealed by Brahman cannot itself reveal Brahman. Because the *indriyas* do not have the *yogyatā* (ability) to reveal Brahman, the latter cannot be the object of *indriyapratyakṣa*. The sense of taste cannot help us to perceive the colour of milk as that sense does not have the *yogyatā* to perceive colour.[83]

There is no perceivable *hetu* (probans) in Brahman with the help of which Brahman can be inferred. And there is no example which can corroborate the *vyāpti* (universal concomitance) between such a *hetu* (probans) and Brahman,

the *sādhya* (probandum). There being no instance of something similar to Brahman, the *vyāpti* between the *hetu* and *sādhya* cannot be corroborated with the help of an illustration. Moreover, there are Upaniṣadic texts like, "*Nendriyāni nānumānam*", (There is neither any sense-perception nor any inference with regard to Brahman), "*Naiṣāmatistarkeṇāpaneyā*", Kaṭha. Up. 2.9. (Such a cognition is not possible through arguments). These texts also show that Brahman cannot be known by perception and inference.

The Naiyāyika may argue that the Lord (*parameśvara*), known as Brahman in Advaita Vedānta, can be inferred by the following argument:

"*Kṣityādini mahābhūtāni sakartṛkāni, kāryatvāt, ghaṭādivat.*" (The ultimate elements like earth etc. are due to an agent, as they are effects. For example, the pot.) The Nimbārkist argues that although such an inference can establish the existence of an agent in general, yet the existence of Brahman having infinite blessed qualities cannot be proved with the help of that inference. Brahman can be proved by following the *śāstras* (Vedas, Upaniṣads, Smṛtis etc.) and with the help of inferences rooted in the *śāstras*. An inference independent of the *śāstras* is not competent to prove the existence of Brahman.

Brahman Is Not The Object Of *Upamāna, Arthāpatti And Anupalabdhi*

Brahman cannot be known by *upamāna* (knowledge by comparison) and *arthāpatti* (knowledge by implication) either. He cannot be known by *upamāna*, as there is nothing similar to Brahman, and knowledge of similarity is the basic ingredient of knowledge through *upamāna*. Since *arthāpatti* is a form of inference, and since Brahman cannot be known by

inference, He cannot be known by *arthāpatti* either. Brahman cannot be known by *anupalabdhi* (non-cognition), whose object is *abhāva* (negation / absence). Since Brahman is omnipresent (*'Sarvaṃ khalvidaṃ brahma'*), His absence at any place or time cannot be known.[84]

Brahman Is Known Only From *Śāstras*

In the opinion of the Nimbārkist Brahman can be known only with the help of statements of the *śāstras*. The statements of the *śāstras* are, as we know, included in the *śabdapramāṇa* (verbal testimony). Brahman can, in this sense, be said to be the object of *śabdapramāṇa*. The Nimbārkist is, however, cautious enough to realize that the view that Brahman is known through *śāstras*, goes against the view that Brahman is *svaprakāśa* (self-revealing). Hence, he puts forward the view that *śāstras* like the Vedas gives us indication regarding the essence and majesty of Brahman. In His own essence Brahman is not directly known even from the *śāstras*. In his own essence Brahman is only intuited. And this direct intuition occurs in a mind that is purified by the teaching of the *śāstras* and intense meditation on Brahman. We shall return to this point later on. Let us, for the time being, concentrate on explaining why the Nimbārkist maintains that Brahman is known only through the *śāstras* (*śāstramātravedya*).

In his commentary on B.S. 1.1.4,the Nimbārkist holds that this *sūtra*, *'Śāstrayonitvāt'*, is concerned with showing that Brahman cannot be known through any other source of valid cognition, except verbal testimony (really, except the *śāstras*). That Brahman is known only from the *śāstras*, the Vedas and Upaniṣads, the Nimbārkist points out, is evident from the following statements from the Upaniṣads and Smṛtis:

(i) "*Sarve vedā yatpadamāmananti*." (Whose greatness is proclaimed by all the Vedas. Kaṭha. Up. 1.21.)

(ii) "*Tantvaupaniṣdaṃ puruṣaṃ pṛchhāmi*" (I am asking about the great person who is spoken of in the Upaniṣads. Bṛhad. Up. 3.1)

(iii) "*Vedaiśca sarvairahameva vedyaḥ*". (I am proclaimed in all the Vedas, *Gītā*, 15, 15.)

(iv) "*Nāvedavinmanute taṃ vṛhantam.*" (One who does not know the Vedas cannot know the great one. *Taittirīya Brahmaṇa*, 3.12.9.7)

But an objection can be raised: if Brahman is said to be known by the words of the Vedas, then Brahman cannot be said to be *svaprakāśa*. The Nimbārkist argues that the objection would have been valid if the words of ordinary men were held to be the source of knowledge of Brahman. The power that Vedic words have of conveying sense are non-different from Brahman's power. (Words of men do not have such a power.) Hence, if such Vedic words, whose power of signifying something is identical with Brahman's power, is supposed to be the source of knowledge of Brahman, Brahman can still be said to be *svaprakāśa*.[85]

It may be pointed out that the Upaniṣadic statement, "*Yato vācā nirvarttante aprāpya manasā saha.*"[86] shows that Brahman cannot be known by verbal testimony. So how can it be admitted that Brahman is known by the words of the Vedas? In answer the Nimbārkist says that the Upaniṣadic statement does not deny that Brahman is knowable through the Vedas. It only signifies that Brahman, who possesses infinite powers and infinite divine qualities, cannot be known fully from the Vedic statements. That Brahman's powers and qualities are limitless and cannot be exhaustively known by the human mind is implied in the Brahmasūtra (3.2.22), "*Prakṛtaitāvattvaṃ hi pratiṣedhati . . .*". In this way Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa tries to

defend the Nimbārka view that Brahman is known only through the Vedic statements.[87]

Mādhavamukunda offers an alternative explanation of the statement, "*Yato vācā nirvarttante aprāpya manasā saha*". In his opinion the statement intends to imply that words (*vāk*) used by the ordinary people cannot be source of knowledge of Brahman. Words used by ordinary people are inherently defective, and hence they fail to give us knowledge of Brahman. That Brahman can be known only from Vedic statements.[88] and not from the words of ordinary people, is what is signified by the aforesaid Upaniṣadic statement. If that statement denies that the Vedas provide us with knowledge of Brahman, then it will contradict such statements as, "*Taṃ tvaupaniṣadaṃ puruṣam pṛcchāmi*", "*Vedaiśca sarvairahameva vedyaḥ*". The word, '*manas*' referred to in the Upaniṣadic statement, Mādhavamukunda says, stands for the mind not purified by the instructions of the *śāstras* and the preceptor. Brahman does not reveal Himself to such an impure mind. He argues that if the statement, "*Yato vācā nirvarttante . . .*" is interpreted as denying the fact that Brahman can be known by any mind whatsoever, then the statement would obviously contradict the well-known Upaniṣadic statement, "*Manasaivānudraṣṭavyam*". (Brahman is intuited indeed by the mind. Kaṭha. Up. 2.6.9)[89]

Mādhavamukunda argues that Brahman cannot be said to be unknowable by any source of knowledge whatever. If Brahman is not knowable by any source of knowledge, then He would be an absolutely non-existent unreal entity like the hare's horn. Moreover, the *śastras* seeking to establish Brahman would be involved in a fruitless endeavour if Brahman is completely unknown and unknowable.[90]

It must be pointed out at this stage that although the Nimbārkist holds that Brahman can be known from Vedic

statements alone, yet he does not claim that Brahman can be directly intuited from the teaching of the Vedic statements. Brahman can be directly intuited, he says, only if the self-revealing Brahman expresses Himself, out of mercy, to a mind purified by meditation. The Nimbārkist emphasizes the fact that even meditation and pure mind are not the causes (*karaṇa*) producing direct intuition of Brahman (*brahmasākṣātkāra*). Brahman is self-revealing. Nothing can be said to be the revealer of Brahman who is *svaprakāśa*.[91] Meditation and purity of the mind only remove the obstructions to the direct intuition of Brahman.

Mind usually wanders from object to object. Brahman does not reveal Himself to such an unbridled mind. He reveals Himself only to a mind that is concentrated on a single point. Practice of meditation is needed only for controlling the mind and producing in it concentration on a single point. When the practice of meditation removes all impediments to the steadfastness of mind; Brahman reveals Himself to such a steadfast mind. Thus meditation is not the cause of the direct intuition of Brahman. It only removes the obstacles to the self-revelation of Brahman. Even mind should not be supposed to be the cause of the direct intuition of Brahman. Brahman reveals Himself to a steadfast mind purified by meditation. This is what is signified by the Upaniṣadic statements like, (i) "*Manasaivānudraṣṭavyam*" Kaṭha. U.P. 2.6.9; (ii) "*Dṛśyate tvagrayā buddhyā*" [Brahman is seen at the forefront of *buddhi* (mind). Kaṭha. Up. 2.6.9]; (iii) "*Tatastu taṃ paśyati niṣkalaṃ dhyāyamānaḥ*".(Then the meditator sees that partless Brahman. Mund. Up. 3.1.8.)

Thus, it is clear that mind and meditation are not the causes of the direct intuition of Brahman. Mind and meditation only remove obstacles to the direct intuition of Brahman. It

transpires from the above discussion that the self-revealing Brahman reveals Himself only to a mind that is purified by the instructions of the Vedas and constant meditation. Although one has indirect knowledge of Brahman from the words of the Vedas, such a knowledge does not amount to direct intuitive knowledge (*sākṣātkāra*). Direct intuitive knowledge of Brahman is possible only if He chooses, out of kindness, to reveal Himself to a mind well-prepared by meditation. He can be directly intuited only by someone whom He chooses to grace by a direct vision of Himself. ["*Yamevaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyaḥ*". (He is obtained only by someone whom He chooses. Kaṭha. Up. 1.2.23.)]

Refutation Of The Advaita *Śābdāparokṣavāda*

The Advaitin maintains that although the *mahāvākyas* (great sayings), like "*Tat tvamasi*" (Thou art that), are scriptural sentences, nevertheless they produce immediate knowledge (*aparokṣa-jñāna*) of the identity of the *jīva* and Brahman. The knowledge of this identity is, to start with, mediate knowledge (*parokṣa-jñāna*) derived from words. Yet, by meditation it can be turned into perceptual knowledge (*aparokṣa-jñāna*). A person who wants to liberate himself / herself from the delusive appearance of multiplicity, can attain the direct realization of the unity of his / her own self and Brahman, from the *mahāvākya*, "*Tat tvamasi*".

The Advaitin gives an example to strengthen the possibility of the conversion of mediate knowledge obtained from verbal testimony into immediate knowledge. Ten persons, having crossed a river, count themselves. Every time the counter forgets to count himself and finds there are only nine of them. The error is rectified by a passer-by who tells the counter, "you are the tenth" ("*Daśamastvamasi*"). This mediate knowledge from the words of the trustworthy person becomes immediate

knowledge when, counting again and including himself, the counter comes to realize, 'I am the tenth'. In the same way, the Advaitin contends, the scriptural precept, "*Tat tvamasi*", comes to be realized by the person who hears it, in an immediate consciousness of the form. 'I am Brahman'.

The Ṇimbārkist does not accept the Advaita theory of immediate knowledge from verbal testimony (*śābdāparokṣavāda*). He rejects the Advaitin's claim that immediate knowledge of identity is gained from hearing the precept, "*Tat tvamasi*". According to the Nimbārkist, hearing of words only produces mediate knowledge. Hence, hearing of the precept is not the cause of the immediate intuition of Brahman. The view that hearing of precepts is not the source of direct realization of Brahman, the Nimbārkist argues, is corroborated by some Upaniṣadic statements. These are: (1) "*Nāyamātmā pravacanena labhyo, na medhayā, na vahunā śruteṇa*". (This *ātman* is not realized from statements. Neither is it realized by the intellect, nor by many hearings) Kaṭha. Up. I.2.23; (ii) "*Śṛṇanto 'pi vahaba yaṃ na vidyuḥ*". [Who is not known (directly) even by hearing of Him many times.]

Mādhavamukunda points out that it is not even reasonable to treat the knowledge produced from hearing, 'you are the tenth', as an immediate knowledge. Even though the knowledge corresponding to the word 'you', here, may be admitted to be immediate, yet the knowledge corresponding to the word, 'the tenth' must be treated as mediate. When the person concerned knows that 'I am the tenth', his / her knowledge is produced by visual or tactile sensation, with the help of the verbal advice, 'you are the tenth'. If the person is not blind, then his immediate knowledge, 'I am the tenth', is produced through his visual sensation, aided by the advice of the passer-by. If the person is blind, then the immediate

knowledge is produced by his tactile sensation, aided by the advice.[92] The immediate knowledge, 'I am the tenth', dispels his perceptual error that there are only nine people.

Among the Advaitins, even Maṇḍanamiśra and Vācaspatimiśra, admit that *jīva's* immediate intuition of the identity of himself and Brahman is possible, not through the hearing of any precept, but through *antaḥkaraṇa*.[93] The Advaitins of the Vivaraṇa school are really the advocates of '*śābdāparokṣavāda*'. According to them, the knowledge of the identity of self and Brahman is immediate, though it is derived from the precept, '*Tat tvamasi*'.

The Advaitin supporting the *śābdāparokṣavāda* opines that mediacy and immediacy of knowledge depend not on the *pramāṇas* (sources of knowledge) like *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna* and *śabda*, but on the objects of knowledge. Brahman is self-revealing pure consciousness. As such, It is immediately intuited (*aparokṣa*). Since Brahman is an immediately intuited (*aparokṣa*) entity, even the knowledge of Its identity with the individual self, derived from the precept, '*Tat tvamasi*' is really an immediate knowledge.

That objects which are immediately known (*aparokṣa*) are always known in an immediate way is, the Advaitin points out, obvious from the knowledge of pleasure and pain. Pleasure and pain are, according to the Advaitin, *kevalasākṣibhāsya* (illuminated / revealed by the witnessing consciousness[94] alone). This means that in the knowledge of pleasure and pain there is no instrumentality of any foreign source such as sense organ or inference. Pleasure and pain are thus known immediately. Accordingly, the Advaitin argues, when a happy person is told, 'you are happy', his / her knowledge of his / her happiness, though derived from another person's statement, is, nevertheless, an immediate knowledge. The Advaitin's

argument has been presented in the form of an *anumāna* by *Ānandabodha*: "*Vimataṃ śābdajñānamaparokṣam-aparokṣaviṣayatvāt sukhajñānavat*". (The disputed verbal knowledge is immediate, as its object is immediate. For example, the knowledge of pleasure. *Nyāyaratnāvalī*, by Ānandabodha.)

Mādhavamukunda refutes the '*śābdāparokṣavāda*' of the Advaitin. He says that the Advaita *anumāna* quoted above is unjustified. The Upaniṣadic statement, "*Manasaivānu-draṣṭavyam*" Kaṭha. Up. 2.6.9, clearly shows that Brahman is directly intuited by the mind purified by meditation. He is not directly intuited from the hearing of the *mahāvākya*, "*Tat tvamasi*". Mādhavamukunda also shows that the Advaitin's contention that knowledge of the directly intuited entity must necessarily be immediate, is unacceptable. If any knowledge of the directly intuited entity is necessarily immediate, then even inferential knowledge of the identity of Brahman and *jīva* would have to be treated as immediate knowledge. The identity of Brahman and *jīva* is really nothing but pure consciousness. Since that consciousness is directly intuited, the inferential knowledge of the *jīva's* identity with Brahman must also be treated as immediate knowledge. Yet inference always yields mediate knowledge.[95]

Madhusūdana Saraswati says that knowledge derived from statements becomes immediate when the knowledge of the object becomes identical with the consciousness of the knower. Mādhavamukunda rejects this view by arguing that if the identity of the knowledge of the object with the consciousness of the knower constitutes an immediate knowledge, then the inferential knowledge of the identity of Brahman and *jīva*, would also, perforce, be treated as an immediate knowledge. The reason is, in this inferential knowledge also the knowledge of the object is identical with

the consciousness of the knower.[96]

If the immediate intuition of Brahman were possible, the Nimbārkist says, from the hearing of the Upaniṣadic precept, then the Upaniṣads would not have stated that the hearing of the precept should be followed by meditation. That the the hearing of the precept must be followed by meditation is evident from the Upaniṣadic statement, "*Ātmā vāre draṣṭavyaḥ śrotvyaḥ, mantavyaḥ nididhyāsitavyaḥ*" Bṛhad. Up IV,5, 6.

Moreover, in the day to day life also it is seen that when someone is told, 'This is a pot', then he /she has immediate knowledge that the thing in front is a pot. Yet, hearing of the words, 'This is a pot' does not, by itself, produce that immediate knowledge. The eyes are the principal causes with the help of which the person concerned has this immediate knowledge. Just as the light assists the eyes in their task of producing the visual perception, similarly, the hearing of, 'This is a pot', also helps the eyes in causing the perception of the pot. If the statement, 'This is a pot' could, by itself, produce the immediate knowledge of the pot lying nearby, then the pot would have been seen even in darkness, just from hearing, 'This is a pot'. In the same way, hearing of the precept, '*Tat tvamasi*' does not, by itself, produce immediate knowledge of Brahman. Hearing of the precept assists the meditation (*nididhyāsana*), on *jīva-brahman* identity, in its task of purifying the mind. The mind, so purified, is the locus in which Brahman reveals Himself directly. Thus what helps the mind in having the direct intuition of Brahman, is meditation, and not the hearing of the precept. (It is to be kept in mind that the self-revelation of Brahmaṇ is really the principal cause of the direct intuition of Brahman; meditation and mind are said to be cause of this direct intuition only in a secondary sense.) In this way, the Nimbārkist refutes the Advaita Vedāntin's '*śābdāparokṣavāda*'.[97]

Nimbārka View Of *Svaprakāśatva* (Self-revealing Character) of Brahman

The Nimbārka view that the direct intuition of Brahman is not possible from hearing the Upaniṣadic precept is linked with the Nimbārka view that Brahman is *svaprakāśa* (self-revealing). It is to be pointed out at this stage that there is some difference between the Advaita interpretation of *svaprakāśatva* and the Nimbārka interpretation of the same.

Citsukhācārya, the Advaitin, defines *svaprakśatva* as: "*Avedyatve satyaparokṣa-vyavahāra-yogyatvam*".[98] According to the Advaitin, Brahman (which is pure consciousness) is never the object of any consciousness or knowledge. However, the Advaitin maintains that Brahman is capable of being treated as an immediately revealed entity, inspite of the fact that It is not the object of any consciousness. Hence, the *svaprakāśatva* of Brahman consists of the fact that Brahman is capable of being treated as an immediately self-revealing entity, inspite of Its not being an object of any consciousness. Mādhavamukunda rejects Citsukhācārya's definition of *svaprakāśatva*. He shows that inert objects are revealed by consciousness which does not belong to them. However, Brahman is not revealed by any consciousness external to Him. He is revealed by His own essential consciousness. Hence Brahman is *svaprakāśa* in the sense that He is the object of His own consciousness. If Brahman is supposed to be revealed by some other external consciousness, then that consciousness also needs to be revealed by some other external consciousness, and the third one needs to be revealed by the fourth external consciousness. The view that Brahman is revealed by some external consciousness thus leads to an infinite regress. Thus Brahman is *svaprakāśa* in the sense that He is revealed by His own essential consciousness.

The Advaitin contends that Brahman is not the object

of consciousness inasmuch as Brahman Itself is consciousness. So, in his view, it will be contradictory to say that the same entity, Brahman, the knower-consciousness, is also known as the object. The same entity cannot simultaneously be both a subject and an object. The Nimbārkist however argues that there is no contradiction in maintaining that the same entity can simultaneously be both a subject and an object. We often say, 'I know myself' ("*Māmahaṃ jānāmi*"). Thus the knower knows himself. We also say, 'the knowability of objects (*prameyatva*) is knowable ('*prameyatvaṃ prameyam*'). Thus it is not contradictory to say that knowability itself is known. Since all of us are aware that knowability itself is known, there is no contradiction in admitting that Brahman, the knower-consciousness is revealed by His own consciousness as an object.[99]

Moreover, the Advaitin proves the falsity (*mithyātva*) of the appearance of multiplicity (*prapañca*) with the help of *anumāna*. This *mithyātvānumāna* being included in the appearance[100] of multiplicity, must be admitted by the Advaitin to be a *mithyānumāna*. Thus, according to the Advaitin, *mithyānumāna* is itself the object of *mithyānumāna*. Hence, Mādhavamukunda concludes, there is no contradiction in saying that the same Brahman, the knower-consciousness, is also the object of consciousness.[101]

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Brahman According To Rāmānujācārya And Bhāskarācārya

Rāmānujācārya's view regarding Brahman's nature is quite similar to that held by Nimbārkacārya. Rāmānujācārya describes Brahman as *saguṇa, saviśeṣa* (with specific aspects), locus of infinite auspicious qualities, omniscient, omnipotent

and devoid of all natural despicable qualities. He engages Himself in the work of creation, maintenance and dissolution of the world as a sport.[102] Rāmānujācārya refers to Brahman as Viṣṇu and not as Kṛṣṇa.[103] Rāmānujācārya does not refer to Rādhā in his works. But since Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa are really identical, it can easily be assumed that Rāmānujācārya's and Nimbārkācārya's conceptions are significantly similar. However, it must be kept in mind that *jīva* and *jagat,* as Rāmānujācārya sees it, constitute the body of Brahman. Nimbārkācārya, on the other hand, sees *jīva* and *jagat* as Brahman's qualities / powers, inseparable parts of Brahman. We shall discuss this in detail in the next chapter.

Bhāskarācārya also embraces the theory of *dvaitādvaita* like Nimbārkācārya. Bhāsḳarācārya also describes Brahman as omniscient, omnipotent and *saviśeṣa*. Yet he does not describe Brahman as the embodied *Puruṣottama*, Śrīkṛṣṇa. He always speaks of Brahman as *īśvara*.[104] He never refers to Rādhā. According to Bhāskarācārya, Brahman is qualified by omniscience, omnipotence and an infinite number of unthinkable powers.[105] Bhāskarācārya does not, like Nimbārkācārya, speak of Brahman's affection towards the devotees. According to Bhāskarācārya Brahman has two forms, the *kāraṇarūpa* and the *kāryarūpa*. The former is natural, but the latter is adventitious. Hence, Bhāskarācārya's theory of *dvaitādvaita* is known as *aupādhika-dvaitādvaitavāda.* We have already discussed *aupādhika-dvaitādvaitavāda* in Chapter I (pages 20-23). We need not repeat that discussion here.

Notes & References

1. "*Asyā 'cintya-vicitra-saṃsthānasampannasyāsaṃkheya-nāmarūpādi-viśeṣāśrayasyā-cintya-rūpasya viśvasya sṛṣṭi-sthiti-layā yasmāt sarvajñādyananta-guṇāśrayād brahmeśa-kālādi-niyantar-bhagavato bhavati tadeva . . brahma.*" (*Vedāntapārijāta-saurabha* commentary on B.S. 1.1.2.)

2. Although Brahman is referred to here as the creator, sustainer etc. of the world, it is to be understood that Brahman is really the creator sustainer etc. of the entire universe. Even in the subsequent uses, the word, 'world' is to be understood as meaning 'the universe'.

3. "*Yasmāt sarveśvarāt sarvajñāt sarvaśakteḥ paramakāraṇāt sarvaniyantar-bhagavataḥ śrīpuruṣottamādasya, jagato nāmarūpābhyāṃ vyākṛtasya . . . sṛṣṭi-sthitilayamokṣāḥ pravartante tadbrahma . . . .* (*Vedantakaustabha* commentary on B.S. 1.1.2).

4. "*Athāto brahmajijñāsā*, B.S. 1.1.1 (Then, accordingly, is the enquiry regarding Brahman.)

5. See *Vedantadarshan*, Swami Santadas, pp. 5-6, Swami Santadas Institute of Culture, 2005.

6. Brahman is implied here to be not only the material (*prakṛti=upādāna*), but also the efficient cause of the world and *jīvas*. The major premise, as stated in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 6, is: 'Are you asking for the knowledge by which . . . even the unknown becomes known'? The example is : 'From the knowledge of one lump of clay all things made of clay are known'. They are harmonised by the conclusion that Brahman is both the material and efficient cause of the world and *jīvas*.

The harmony is not possible if Brahman is only the material cause or only the efficient cause of *jīva* and *jagat*.

7. Since the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* states that Brahman willed that He Himself will be many, it follows that Brahman is the material cause of *jīva* and *jagat*.

8. This *sūtra* signifies that Brahman is both the material transformed and the agent of transformation.

9. "*Neha nānāsti kiñcana*." ("There is no manifold here." Kaṭha. Up. 2.1.11.)
"*Yasmāt paraṃ nāparamasti kiñcana*." ("There is nothing apart from Brahman," Śvet. Up. 3.9)
"*Na tadasti vinā yat syānmayā bhūtaṃ carācaraṃ.*" ("There is nothing in the world of moving and unmoving beings, which is other than myself." *Gīta*, 10.39.)

10. *Prakṛti* is one of the two ultimate principles mentioned by Sāṃkhya in explaining creation.

11. This is technically referred to as *tṛibṛtkaraṇa*.

12. Very similar statements are found in *Aiteriyopaniṣad*: "*Ātmā vā idameka evāgra āsit. Sa aikṣata lokān nu sṛjā iti. Sa imāllokānasṛjata.*" ("At the beginning there was this one Self. He judged, 'I shall create the world'. He created this world".)

13. *Vedāntadarshan*, pp. 14-15.

14. For example, *cit* and *ānanda*.

15. See p. 3 above.

16. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are the constituents of *prakṛti*. *Sattva* is light, bright and illuminating (*prakāśaka*). Luminosity of light, power of reflection, upward movement, happiness, bliss etc. are all due to it. *Rajas* is

mobile and stimulating (*upastambhaka*). Restless activity, effort and wild stimulation are its results. *Tamas* is the principle of inertia. Ignorance, sloth, confusion, bewilderment, passivity and negativity are its results. They are called *guṇas*. When the three *guṇas* are in a state of equilibrium there is *pralaya* (dissolution). When the equilibrium is disturbed, evolution of *prakṛti* starts.

17. "*Ye caiva ṣāttvikā bhāvā rājasātāmsāśca ye /*
Matta eveti tān viddhi natvahaṃ teṣu te mayi //
Gītā, 7.12

18. "*Māyāntu prakṛtiṃ vidvānmāyīnantu maheśvaram*".
Švet. Up. 1.10.

19. "*Jñānaśakti-valaiśarya-vīrya-tejāṃsyaśeṣataḥ /*
Bhagavacchabdavācyāni vinā heyairguṇādibhiḥ"//
Viṣṇupurāṇa 6.5.79.

Here the qualities like knowledge, power etc. are described to be expressive of qualities inhering in God. The despicable natural qualities are not so described.

A detailed discussion of Brahman's possessing auspicious qualities and His being bereft of debased qualities is available in *Vedāntaratnamañjuṣā* (pp. 44-5). Besides the qualities like knowledge, power etc. Brahman is said to be endowed with *śauśilya* (being connected with all, including the lowliest), *vātsalya* (affection), *mārdava* (non-endurance of the miseries of devotees), *saūhārdya* (diligence to protect others). Brahman is said to be bereft of debased qualities like *avidyā* (nescience), *asmitā* (egoism). *rāga* (attachment), *dveṣa* (aversion), *karmavipāka* (enjoying fruits of actions).

20. Literally, '*pāda*' means foot. Here it is to be understood in the sense of aspect.

21 "*Udgītametat paramantu brahma tasmiṃstrayaṃ supratiṣṭhākṣarañca.*" Śvet. Up. 1.7.

22. See *Vedantadarshan*, Swami Santadas, Introduction, p.6.

23. "*Upāsanīyaṃ nitarāṃ janaiḥ sadā.*" ("He is worthy of being worshipped always by people," *Daśaślokī*, 6.)

24. See pp. 10, 39.

25. The third *pāda* of Brahman is actually the entire universe.

26. See p. 42. (See also n. 16 of p. 100-101)

27. "*Māyāpradhānādipada-pravācyaṃ śuklādibhedāśca same'pi tatra.*" *Deśaśloki*, 3.

28. "*Jñanasvarūpañca hareradhīnaṃ śarīrasaṃyoga-viyoga-yogyamaṇuṃ hi pratideha-bhinnaṃ jñātṛtvavantaṃ yadanantamāhuḥ.*" (*Jīva* is of the essence of knowledge and dependent on Hari. He is capable of being connected with, and disconnected from the body. He is atomic, different in different bodies. He is knower and infinite. *Daśaślokī*, 1.)

29. "*Tatsṛṣṭvā tadevānuprāviśat*". (See p. 27, n.8.)

30.(i) "*Tatra lakṣaṇaṃ dvividhaṃ — svarūpalakṣaṇaṃ taṭasthalakṣaṇañceti. Tatra svarūpa-meva lakṣaṇaṃ svarūpalakṣaṇaṃ. Yathā satyādikaṃ brahma-svarūpa-lakṣaṇam. "Satyaṃ jñānamanantaṃ brahma", "Ānando brahmeti vyajnāḍ"ityādi śruteḥ . . . . taṭasthalakṣaṇaṃ nāma yāvallakṣya-kālamanavasthite sati yad vyāvarttvakaṃ tadeva. Yathā gandhavattvaṃ pṛthivīlakṣaṇaṃ Mahāpralaye paramāṇuṣūtpatti-kāle ghaṭādiṣu ca gandhābhāvāt.*" *Vedāntaparibhāṣa*, pp. 133-4. Ed. Śrimohan Bhattacharya, Calcutta 1377 Bangabda.

(ii) "*Tatra tāvajjanmādikāraṇatvaṃ māyāviśiṣṭa-brahmaṇaḥ*

svarūpalakṣaṇatve' pyaviruddham. Śuddhabraḥmaṇastu taṭastha-lakṣaṇam. Svarūpa-lakṣaṇatu tasya satyaṃ jñānamanantaṃ brahmetyādi śrutiṣu prasiddham." *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṃgraha*, 4th part, p. 3. Vidyāraṇya Munīsvara, ed. Pramathanath Tarkabhusan, Basumati Sahitya Mandir, 1334 Bangabda.

31. Things which do not have the characteristic of *ādityatva*.

32. Parapakṣa, pp. 421-2.

33.(i) *Vedāntakaustubhaprahā*, commentary on *sūtra*. 1.1.2.

(ii) Parapakṣa, p. 422.

34. "*Tatra jñānaśabdo 'nekavikāra-yuktāntaḥkaraṇavṛtti-pratibimbitacaitanye vyutpannaḥ . . . ekasatyānantaśabdāḥ svagatabhedābhāva-mithyātvābhāva-sajātīya-vijātīya-dvitīyābhāvābhidhāna-dvāreṇa tatra lakṣaṇāyā vartante . . . ayamātmā brahma tattvamasītyādi-śabdāśca bhāgatyāga-lakṣaṇayā brahmaṇyeva vartante*". *Vivaraṇa-premeyasaṃgraha*, 4th part, p. 88

35. Parapakṣa, p. 426.

36. Parapakṣa, pp. 424-5.

37. Parapakṣa, pp. 429-30.

38. See p. 39.

39. According to the theory of reflection (*partibimbavāda*), advocated by Advaitins like Prakāśātman, pure consciousness, the prototype (*bimba*), conditioned by root nescience, is īśvara, the lord of the universe, and the same consciousness, limited by the internal organ (*manas*) is *jīva*.

40. "*Jīva-parameśvara-sādhāraṇa-caitanyamātraṃ bimbam. Tasyaiva bimbasyā-vidyātmikāyāṃ māyāyāṃ pratibimbamīśvaracaitanyam. Antaḥkaraṇeṣu pratibimbaṃ jīvacaitanyam . . . etanmate jalāśayagata-śarābagata-sūryapratimbayoriva jīva parameśvara-yorbhedah . . . Bimbapratibimba kalpanopādhiśca ekajīvavāde avidyā. Anekajīvavāde antaḥkaraṇānyeva.*" *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, ed. Srimohan Bhattacharya, Calcutta 1377, p. 311.

41. Parapakṣa, p. 432.

42. Parapakṣa, p. 433.

43. See p. 216.

44. Parapakṣa, p. 433.

45. "*Tadevaṃ niravayavaṃ brahma na pariṇamate. Kintu vivartate iti dvitīya pakṣo'ṅgīkāryaḥ. Tasminnapi pakṣe pūrvarūpamaparityajato brahmaṇo nirvikāratvāt jagadrūpeṇa vikariṣyamāṇaṃ vastvantaraṃ kiñcidaṅgīkāryam. Tat kiṃ māyā utānyat. Nānyāt.*" *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṃgraha*, Part 4, p. 30.

46. Parapakṣa, pp. 433-4.

47. "*Sṛṣṭivākyañca 'tadaikṣate'ti nimittatvam, 'vahusyām' ityupādānatvañca pratipādayatīti santoṣṭavyam.*" *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṃgraha*, Part 4, p. 8.

48. Parapakṣa, pp. 433-4.

49. See p. 42.

50. "*Māyāntu prakṛtiṃ vidyānmāyinantu maheśvaram.*" Švet. Up. 4.10.

51. See. p. 36.

52. Parapakṣa, p. 436.

53. The qualities which (the Upaniṣads) intend to speak of, are understood (in respect of Brahman).

54. See p. 35.

55. Śvet. Up. 1.10. See p. 38, n.18.

56. "*Parāsya śaktirvividhaiva śruyate svābhāvikīj̇ñāna-balakriyā ca.*" Śvet. Up. 6.8.

57. "Because the word, '*ānandamaya*' has been repeatedly quoted (in the Upaniṣad)".

58. 'Here the connection with that (i.e. the connection of Brahman with *ānandamaya*) has been taught (in the Upaniṣads)'.

59. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra* 1.1.20.

60. Different from the *vijñānamaya* (full of consciousness) is the *ānandamaya*, which resides inside the *vijñānamaya* [This *ānandamaya* is the self (*ātman*) of the *vijñānamaya.*]

61. See p. 69.

62. *Annamaya* = made of / full of food.

63. *Prāṇamaya* = consisting of / full of life.

64. *Manomaya* = consisting of / full of mind.

65. *Vijñānamaya* = consisting of / full of consciousness.

66. *Vedantadarshan*, Swami Santadas, p. 36.

We should keep it in mind that Swami Santadas maintains that the attainment of *ānandamaya* is really *mokṣa*, inasmuch as attaining that one is free from the bondage of fear etc. (See p. 71).

67. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra* 1.1.20.

68. *Vedantadarshan*, Swami Santadas, pp. 36-37.

69. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra* 1.1.20.

70. "*Ādhyānāya prayojanābhāvāt.*" B.S. 3.3.14. See also the next *sūtra*, B.S. 3.3. 15.

71. *Vedantadarshan*, Swami Santadas, p. 39.

72. *Vedantadarshan*, Swami Santadas, p. 39.

73. For commentaries on these Upaniṣadic statements see *Nimbārkabhāṣya* and *Śrinivāsabhāṣya* on *Braḥmasūtra.*

74. See p. 64.

75. See pp. 43-45.

76. See pp. 45-46.

77. *Gurushishyasambāda*, pp. 80-81, Sudhir Gopal Mukherjee, first edition, Calcutta.

78. Because air and ether have subtle forms compared to earth, water, fire, and because they are partless, they have been referred to here as *amūrta*. Yet, they are not *amūrta* like Brahman.

79. See *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. IV, pp. 221-2, Jadunath Sinha, Sinha Publishing House, Calcutta 1973. Swami Santadas interprets the four *vyuhas* as: Vāsudeva is *nirviśeṣa*, *amūrta* (unmanifest) Brahman. Saṃkarṣaṇa is the first *puruṣa* in nature. Pradyumna is the *puruṣa* established on *buddhi / manas*. Aniruddha is the *puruṣa* (with the great body, consisting of the collection of *jīvas*) established on *ahaṃkāra*.

80. See *Vedantadarshan*, p. 136, Swami Santadas.

81. "Origination is impossible."

82. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra,* 1.1.3, p. 45. Delhi edition.

83. Parapakṣa, p. 506.

84. Parapakṣa, pp. 508-11.

85. Parapakṣa, p. 512.

86. See p. 70.

87. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra,* 1.1.3, See also Parapakṣa, p. 513.

88. The Vedas are not created by any man.

89. Parapakṣa, p. 527.

90. Ibid.

91. Parapakṣa, pp. 444-5.

92. Parapakṣa, p. 824.

93. "*Śabdastu nāparokṣapramāhetuḥ*". *Kalpataru,* p. 55. (Bombay edition).

94. See, p. 234, n. 46.

95. Parapakṣa, p. 825.

96. Ibid.

97. Parapakṣa, p. 827.

98. *Tattvapradīpikā,* p. 9. Ed. Kashinath Shastri, Bombay, 1915.

99. Parapakṣa, p. 521.

100. According to the Advaitin, Brahman alone is real. All else is included in the appearance of multiplicity.

101. Parapakṣa, pp. 520-21.

102. "*Brahmaśabdena svabhāvato nirastanikhiladoṣo'navadhikātiśayā-saṃkhyeya-kalyāṇa-guṇa-gaṇaḥ puruṣottamo'bhidhīyate*". *Śrībhāṣya, sūtra*, 1.1.1.

"*Paraṃ brahṃa svabhāvata eva nirastanikhiladoṣagandhaṃ samastakalyāṇa-guṇātmakaṃ jagadutpattisthiti-saṃhārāntaḥ-praveśaniyamādilīlaṃ*" Ibid.

103. "*Asmiñchāstre parasya brahmaṇo viṣṇornirastājñānādinikhila-doṣagandhasya samastakalyāṇa-guṇātmakasya mahāvibhūteḥ pratipannatayā*". (Since in this *śastra parabrahma* Viṣṇu has been understood as being possessed of the great quality of being the locus of all auspicious qualities. *Śrībhāṣya, sūtra* 1.1.1.) See p. 108 of Puna edition (ed. R.D. Karmarkar).

104. "*Brahmaśabdena īśvaro gṛhyate*". *Bhāskarabhāṣya*", *sūtra* 1.1.1.

105. "*Anantā hi tasya śaktayo'cintyāśca*". *Bhāskarabhāṣya, sūtra* 1.4.25.

Chapter - III

NATURE OF *JĪVA* ACCORDING TO NIMBĀRKA PHILOSOPHY

As already noted before,[1] the *jīva* and the world are, in the Nimbārkist's opinion, effects of the revelation of Brahman's powers of consciousness (*cit*) and bliss (*ānanda*). Brahman expresses Himself in the manifold *jīvas* and the world of multiplicity. This is evident in the *Taittirīya* Upaniṣadic saying: "He willed, I shall be many. He created all theseṃ. Having created them, He entered into them". "Having entered, He became the manifest and the unmanifest". ("*So'kāmayata, vahusyāṃ prajāyeyeti. Sa . . .idaṃ sarvamàsṛjata yadidaṃ kiñca. Tatsṛṣṭvā tadevānuprāveśat*". "*Tadanuparaviśya sacca tyaccābhavat*". Tait. Up. 2.6.) The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* explicity states that Brahman enters into the *jīvas* created by Him: Having entered into the three deities[2] Brahman expressed Himself in a variety of names and forms. ("*Seyaṃ devatemāstisro devatā anenaiva jīvenātmānupraviśya nāmarūpe vyākarot*". Chānd. Up. 6.3.2)[3]

That *jīva* and *jagat* are parts of Brahman, can be clearly understood from the following statements of the Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* and the *Bhagavadgītā*:

(i) "*Pādo'syaviśvābhūtāni*". [*Jīva-jagat* is only a part (*pāda*) of Brahman. Chānd. Up. 3.12.6]

(ii) "*Mamaivāṃśo jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*" (My eternal part is known as *jīva* in this world. *Gītā*, 15.7)

(iii) "*Viṣṭabhyāhamidaṃ kṛtsnamekāṃśena sthito jagat*". (I am holding this whole world as part of myself. *Gīta*, 10.42)

(iv) "*Aṃśo nānāvyapadeśādanyathā cāpi dāśakitavādit-vamadhīyata eke*". (*Jīva* is described in the Upaniṣads

as a part of Brahman. *Atharvaveda* describes even the lower class *kaivarttas*, the servants and the people cheating others in gambling as Brahman. B.S. 2.3.42)

Jīva is conceived as a part of Brahman by the Nimbārkist in the sense that it is an expressed manifestation of His power of *cit*. Śrīnivāsācārya explicitly states this when he says: "*Jīvaḥ paramātmano' ṃśaḥ, 'aṃśo hyeṣa parasye' tiśruteḥ. Aṃśo hi śaktirūpo grāhyaḥ, eṣa parasya śaktiḥ, jīvo'lpaśaktirasvatantrah*". (*Jīva* is the part of *paramātman*; it is established from the Upaniṣadic statement, 'This is the part of Brahman'. This 'part' is to be taken as power. This is the power of Brahman. *Jīva* has limited power and is not independent. *Vedāntakaustubha* commentary on B.S. 2.3.42).

Advaitins, however have a different conception regarding *jīva*. According to some Advaitins, Brahman as pure consciousness, limited by the internal organ (*manaḥ = antaḥkaraṇa*), is called '*jīva*'. [Just as the all-pervasive ether (*ākāśa*), limited by a pot is called 'ether of the pot' (*ghaṭākāśa*).] This theory regarding *jīva* is known *avacchedavāda* or the theory of limitation.[4] The limitation of pure consciousness by the internal organ is due to *avidyā* (nescience).

According to some other Advaitins, however, the pure consciousness of Brahman, the prototype (*bimba*), conditioned by root nescience, is *īśvara*, and the same consciousness, as reflected (*pratibimbita*) in nescience is called '*jīva*'. This theory regarding *jīva* is known as *pratibimbavāda* or the theory of reflection.[5]

Nimbārkists like Puruṣottamācārya, Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa, Puruṣottamaprasāda criticise both *avacchedavāda* and *pratibimbavāda*.

Criticising *avacchedavāda* they point out that the

limiting conditions (*upādhis*), internal organs (product of *avidyā*), may either be supposed to divide Brahman into parts,[6] or be supposed to limit Brahman. However, neither alternative is reasonable.

Formless Brahman cannot be conceived to be divided into parts. Moreover, as these parts are due to conditions, they must have origins, and hence cannot be eternal and unborn. However, *jīvas* are described to be unborn and eternal by the Upaniṣads. (For the Nimbārkist's view that *jīvas* are unborn and eternal, see *Vedāntapārijātasaurabha*, 2.3. 16-17.) Moreover, if conditions can limit or circumscribe Brahman, then the latter can no longer be conceived to be omnipresent.

The conditions which are supposed to limit Brahman cannot be either real or unreal. If the conditions are real, they will never be destroyed. Accordingly, *jīvas* conditioned by nescience would never attain liberation. Neither can the conditions be unreal. Conditions, as false appearances, can never be significantly said to constitute real bondages of *jīvas*. The limitation of Brahman is due to nescience. And if the conditions are themselves supposed to be unreal, then how can they be supposed to really bind the *jīva*? The suggestion that an unreal entity binds a *jīva*, is as non-sensical as the statement, 'a dreamt chain binds an awakened individual'[7].

We have already shown above (pp. 56-59) that the Nimbārkist rejects the Advaita *pratibimbavāda*. We will only briefly recapitulate the arguments here. (i) Formless Brahman cannot be said to be reflected in formless nescience. (ii) Real Brahman cannot be said to be reflected on unreal nescience, the condition (*upādhi*) of reflection. If, however, nescience is also taken to be real, Brahman cannot be the only reality as claimed by the Advaitin. Advaita monism must, accordingly, have to be abandoned. Moreover, if nescience is real, then the

jīva cannot be liberated by overcoming nescience. (iii) The prototype and that on which it is reflected must be in different places. Yet, Brahman being all pervasive, nescience, the condition of its reflection, must abide in Brahman. (iv) The prototype and its reflection cannot be identical. Yet, Brahman is, in the Advaitin's opinion, identical with the *jīva*. (v) Since reflection is always unconscious, *jīva*, as the reflection must be admitted to be unconscious. But the unconscious nature of the *jīva* is not admitted by Advaita Vedānta, the Upaniṣads, the Smṛtis and common experience.

As discussed later (see pp. 211-16), the characteristics, proof, locus, object, and the activator (*prayojaka*) of nescience cannot be established. Hence, *pratibimbavāda*, which is based on nescience, cannot be established either.

I

Essence Of *Jīva* In Nimbārka Philosophy

Nimbārkācārya says that *jīva* is *jñānasvarūpa* (having knowledge as his essence), and is, at the same time, *jñānāśraya* (the locus of knowledge). *Jīva* is a knower, enjoyer, and dependent on Śrihari. *Jīvas* are atomic in magnitude, infinite, different in different bodies. They attain bodies and depart from them. They are capable of attaining liberation.[8]

That *jīva* has knowledge / consciousness as its essence is proved from the Upaniṣadic and and B.S. statements: (i) "*Ayamātmā'ntaro'vāhyaḥ kṛtsnaprajñāghana eva.*" (This self is intrinsically and totally full of consciousness. Br. Up. 4.5.13) (ii) "*Atrāyaṃ puruṣaḥ svayaṃjyotirbhavati*". (This self is self-luminous. *Haṃsopaniṣad*, 21.) (iii) "*Jño'ta eva*". (*Jīva* is of the essence of knowledge. B.S. 2.3.18)

That *jīva* is an agent (*kartā*), enjoyer (*bhoktā*) and knower (*jñātā*) is evident from Upaniṣadic and B.S. texts. They

are: (i) "*Jānātyevāyaṃ puruṣaḥ*". (This self indeed knows. *Haṃsopaniṣad*, 21.) (ii) "*Eṣa eva hi draṣṭā, śrotā, ghrātā, rasayitā, mantā, boddhā, kartā, vijñānātmā puruṣaḥ*". (He is the *jīva* who sees, hears, smells, enjoys the taste, thinks, understands. He is the agent, knower and of the essence of consciousness. *Praśnopaniṣad*, 4.2.)

It may be objected that the *jīva* cannot be both *jñānasvarūpa* and *jñānāśraya*. As *jñānāśraya*, *jīva* is the locus of knowledge. And *jñāna* as his essence is what is supposed to be contained in it. The container (*ādhāra*) and the contained (*ādheya*) cannot be identical. Just as water cannot be the container of the water thrown into it, similarly, *jīva* as knowledge itself cannot be also the locus of knowledge. Answering this objection, Śrīnivāsācārya points out that as *jñānāśvarūpa*, *jīvātman* is the qualified (*dharmī*); and *jñāna* is his quality (*dharma*). As being essentially an illumination (*prabhāsvarūpa*), the sun is the qualified (*dharmī*). Yet, illumination is contained in it as its quality (*dharma*). Just as the sun and its illumination are the container and the contained, in the same way, *jīva* as *jñānāśraya* is the substratum (*dharmī*), and knowledge (*jñāna*) as his quality (*dharma*) is what is contained therein.[9]

When water is thrown into water, the former does not become identical with the latter. Because both of them are extremely similar (as they belong to the same species), the difference between them is not noticed. Nevertheless, they are different, otherwise the addition of water thrown into it would not have resulted in the increase of the whole volume of water. The water existing before is the container and the water thrown into it is the contained. Hence, there is no contradiction in maintaining that *jīvātman* is both *jñānasvarūpa* and *jñānāśraya*.[10]

II

Refutation Of The Advaita View That *Ātman* Is Not The Agent, Knower, Enjoyer

The Advaitin is of the opinion that *jīvātman* is never an active agent, a knower, an enjoyer. The agent, knower and enjoyer is really the *antaḥkaraṇa* (mind).[11] The agency (*kartṛtva*), knowerhood (*jñātṛtva*) and enjoyerhood (*bhoktṛtva*) of the *antaḥkaraṇa* is superimposed (*adhyasta*) by nescience on the *jīvātman*. The Advaitin gives the example of the illusion of a crystal appearing to be red due to the red colour of a nearby hibiscus being reflected on it. Similarly, the qualities like the agency of the *antaḥkaraṇa* are superimposed by nescience on the individual self.[12] The Nimbārkist, however, rejects the Advaita view of the superimposition of the agency of *antaḥkaraṇa* on *ātman*. Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa and Mādhavamukunda criticise the Advaita view in the following way.

Does the Advaitin hold the superimposition of the agency to be *nirupādhika* (unconditional) or to be *sopādhika* (conditional)? It cannot be unconditional like the illusion of silver in the nacre. In this case, *once* a person knows that the thing is not silver, the correcting knowledge brings about a cessation of his illusion. Similarly, *once* a person knows that the real agent is the *antaḥkaraṇa*, then this correcting knowledge should also bring about the cessation of the erroneous cognition regarding the agency of the self. The erroneous cognition of the agency ought thus to disappear completely *once* a person has real knowledge of the self. Yet, the singular occurrence of the real knowledge regarding self in a person, is not seen to be an antedote to his subsequent misconceptions. The person would continue to be the victim of his misconceptions.

The superimposition of agency cannot be shown by the Advaitin to be conditional (*sopādhika*) either. An example of *sopādhikādhyāsa* is the superimposition of the red colour of a hibiscus on a crystal. In this case, a person can be a victim of the illusory perception of a red crystal at one time. But, when the hibiscus is removed far from the crystal, the person can have the correct cognition that it is really the hibiscus that is red. Thus the person can once have the illusion that the crystal is red (*raktaḥ sphaṭikaḥ*). Yet on another occasion he can have the proper knowledge that the flower is red (*raktaṃ kusumaṃ*). Thus, if the superimposition of agency is *sopādhikādhyāsa*, a person can once have the illusion that the self is the agent (*caitanyaṃ kartṛ*), and on another occasion, the real knowledge that the *antaḥkaraṇa* is the agent (*manaḥ kartṛ*). If the *adhyāsa* of agency is *sopādhika*, then there would be the possibility of the illusory cognition of the self's agency on one occasion, and also the possibility of the valid cognition of the *antaḥkaraṇa*'s agency on another. Since this is never the case, the superimposition of agency cannot be held to be *sopādhika*.

The Advantin may suggest that in the case of the red crystal, there is the locus of the red colour, the hibiscus, and what is superimposed is the red colour and not the hibiscus. (It is to be kept in mind that the illusory red of the crystal is different from the colour of the hibiscus.) Since what is superimposed is only the *dharma* (quality), red, and not the *dharmī* (the qualified), the hibiscus, it is possible to have both the illusion of the red crystal and valid cognition of the red hibiscus. But in the case of the superimposition of agency, the agent, *antaḥkaraṇa*, the *dharmī* (the qualified), itself is superimposed on *ātman*. As in this case there is no *dharma* (viz. bare agency) other than the *antaḥkaraṇa* that is superimposed, there is no possibility of both the illusory cognition of agency (like 'the self is the agent') on one occasion, and the proper cognition of

agency (like 'the *antaḥkaraṇa* is the agent') on another.

The Nimbārkist finds the Advaita suggestion to be unsatisfactory. If, according to the Advaitin, what is superimposed on the self is the *dharmī-antaḥkaraṇa* itself, then there would be no condition (like the hibiscus which is not superimposed) which causes the superimposition. And in the absence of any condition the superimposition of agency cannot be regarded as a conditional superimposition. The Advaitin, however, regards the superimposition of agency to be conditional. He himself also admits that in a conditional erroneous cognition, what is superimposed is the *dharma* and not the *dharmī*. In contrast, in a non-conditional erroneous cognition (like the illusion of silver), what is superimposed is the *dharmī* (like silver). It transpires that the Advaita suggestion that the *dharmī-antaḥkaraṇa* itself is superimposed on the self, would perforce make the superimposition of agency to be unconditional. Yet, the Advaitin considers the superimposition to be conditional.[13]

Mādhavamukunda points out that as *antaḥkaraṇa* is unconscious, it cannot be an agent. Moreover, if *antaḥkaraṇa* is regarded as the agent, then it would be impossible to establish the bondage and liberation of *ātman*. An agent who performs actions has to enjoy / suffer the consequences of his / her actions. Again, an agent who is in bondage engages himself /herself in efforts to be liberated. Vedas, Upaniṣads and Smṛtis speak of the bondage and liberation of the individual self. If *antaḥkaraṇa* is presumed to be the agent, then *antaḥkaraṇa* itself would be in bondage and would be liberated. It cannot be maintained that *antaḥkaraṇa* is the agent, and yet the individual self would reap the consequences of the agent's action, and would, accordingly, be bound and liberated. Hence, if the individual self is admittedly in bondage and eventually attains liberation, it must be acknowledged that the self itself is the agent.

Moreover, if the individual self is not the agent, then the advice regarding taking the appropriate step for attaining liberation could not be given to the individual. Since the Vedas, Upaniṣads *et al* advise the individual *jīva* to strive for attaining liberation, it must be acknowledged that the individual is truly the agent.[14]

The Upaniṣads and *Brahmasūtra* describe the individual self as an agent and enjoyer. Since *jīvas* perform different actions, the Upaniṣads and *Brahmasūtra* contain the advice that *jīvas* should perform sacrifices if they desire to be in heaven, and they should worship Brahman if they want to be liberated. That the *jīvas* perform actions is evident from the statements: (i) "*Kartā śāstrārthavattvāt*". (The *jīva*, who knows the meaning of the scriptures, is the agent. B.S. 2.3.32); (ii) "*Mumūkṣurbrahmopāsita*". (Brahman is worshipped by one who wants to attain liberation. As quoted in Ved. pāri. saurabha, 2.3.34.) Other Upaniṣadic and B.S. texts describing the agency and enjoyerhood of *jīvas* have been referred to earlier (see p.p. 110-11)

The Advaitin argues that it the self is the agent, then that agency would be felt in all circumstances; yet it is not felt in deep sleep. In deep sleep the agent, the *antaḥkaraṇa* is absent. Hence, there is no activity in that state, although the self is present in deep sleep. It is thus evident that the *antaḥkaraṇa* is the real agent. The Nimbārkist however points out that since the individual self is seen to breathe in and out during deep sleep, it cannot be maintained that the self, the agent, is absent in deep sleep. As the Advaitin maintains that the *antaḥkaraṇa* is absent in deep sleep, he cannot insist that the *antaḥkaraṇa* is the agent of the act of breathing.

Even if it be granted that there is no activity in deep sleep due to the absence of *antaḥkaraṇa*, yet it cannot be

admitted that the *antaḥkaraṇa* is the agent. The absence of an effect can be due to the absence of the instrumental cause (*nimitta-kāraṇa*). For example, the non-production of a pot can be due to the absence of the instrumental cause, the stick, with which the potter rotates the wheel for shaping the pot. Yet, the stick is only an accessory of the potter who produces the pot. Similarly, non-activity in deep sleep can be explained as due to the absence of *antaḥkaraṇa*, the instrumental cause. *Antaḥkaraṇa* thus cannot be established as the agent of actions.[15]

The Nimbārkist points that the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Kaṭhopaniṣad* describe *antaḥkaraṇa* as the instrument through which the self acts, enjoys and suffers the consequences of actions. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* statement, '*Manasaivāgre saṃkalpayati*' shows that the self resolves through the instrumentality of the mind. The Kaṭhopaniṣadic statement, "*Ātmendriyamanoyukto bhoktā ityahurmanīṣiṇaḥ*',[16] shows that the self enjoys things with the instrumentality of the body, sense-organs and the mind. Here the self itself is described as the enjoyer, and not the mind.

It must be noted in this context, the Nimbārkist points out, that although the agent of actions knows himself as '*aham*' (I), yet this '*aham*' is not to be confused with '*ahaṃkāra*' which signifies pride or conceit. The word '*aham*' standing for '*ātman*', the agent, is derived from the word, '*asmad*'. The word, '*ahaṃkāra*' is formed by combining the words, '*aham*' and '*kāra*'. The word, '*aham*' is thus different in meaning from the word '*ahaṃkāra*'. The Nimbārkist speaks of '*aham*' in the sense of a conscious self centred around the concept of an ego as the agent of actions.[17]

The Advaitin urges that the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* statement, '*dhyāyatīva lelāyatīva*' (Bṛhad. Up. 4.3.7), suggests that it appears as if the individual self meditates, plays. As a matter of

fact, *antaḥkaraṇa* is the agent which meditates and plays. *Jīva* only *appears* to meditate and play. Here the word, '*iva*' should be interpreted as signifying the 'likeness' (of the acts of meditating and playing) of the individual self. The Nimbārkist, however, points out that the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* statement should be interpreted as implying that the activities of the individual self like meditating and playing are not independent activities, they are all directed by God. Thus, although the activities of the self appear to be ('*iva*' = as if) independent, they are really not so. They are ultimately guided by God. Take the example of a man ordering his subordinates to work under the instruction of his higher authority. Although he seems to give the order independently, he is really guided by the higher authority. Here the man may be stated to be acting as if he is the independent authority (*prabhurivācarati*). Similarly, the activities of *jīvas* appear to be independent; but they are really dependent on God's will. And this is the proper interpretation of the statement, '*dhyāyatīva lelayatīva*'.

The *Gītā* also demonstrates that the ignorant man thinks that he is the independent agent, whereas in reality his activities are really guided by God. However, the *Gītā* never denies the agency of the individual self. Consider the following *ślokas* of the *Gītā*.

"*Prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ /*
Ahaṃkāraviṃuḍhātmā kartā' hamiti manyate //

(Actions are all performed by the *guṇas* of *prakṛti*. However, the *jīva* whose mind is bewildered by egoism, thinks, 'I am the agent'. *Gītā*, 3.27) The *śloka* only denies the independent agency of *jīva*; it does not state that the *jīva* is not the agent in any sense.

"*Tatraivaṃ sati kartāramātmānaṃ kevalantu yaḥ /*
Paśyatyakṛtabuddhitvānna sa paśyati durmatiḥ //

[This being the case (i.e., actions having been performed), he who sees himself as an independent (*kevalaṃ*) agent, cannot see properly due to his unrefined intellect. *Gītā*, 18.16]

The above *śloka* also only denies the independent agency of *jīva*. It does not deny *jīva's* agency altogether. Otherwise, the use of the word, '*kevalam*', meaning, 'only' = 'independent' would be useless. The *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* states, "*Eṣa eva sādhu karma kārayati*". (He makes that *jīva* perform good actions whom He wishes to uplift from this world. *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad*, 3.8.) This statement only indicates that *jīva* does not have independent agency. God makes him act.[18]

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* says that Brahman regulates *jīva's* actions by remaining within them. ("*Antaḥpraviṣṭaḥ śāstā, janānām*". Tait. Up. 3.11.) Even Brahmasūtra 2.3.40, "*Parāttu taccrhuteḥ*", shows that *jīvas* act under Brahman's guidance. The *Gītā* says that Brahman (God) resides in the hearts of all beings, and He makes them work under the influence of *māyā*. *Jīvas* work like machines guided by their controller.[19]

The author of *Brahmasūtra* says that although Brahman governs the actions of *jīvas*, yet He provides them with the will to act depending on the merits and demerits of their past actions. He appoints them in this life to good and bad actions in accordance with their actions of past lives and provides them with reward and punishment of their actions. Just as the cloud's power to produce sprouts of different kinds depends on the different capacities of seeds, in the same way, God's power to produce happiness or suffering of *jīvas* depends on the past merits and demerits of *jīvas*. Thus Brahman cannot be said to be partial to those who enjoy happiness and cruel to those who suffer. *Jīva's* happiness and suffering are due to his past actions.[20]

It may be asked, since before creation *jīvas* did not exist separately from Brahman, and since there were no merit

and demerit before creation, how can it be maintained that after creation Brahman engages *jīvas* in actions in accordance with their past merits and demerits? In answer, Brahmasūtra 2.1.34, "*Na karmāvibhāgāditi cennā' nāditvādupapadyate cāpyupalabhyate ca*",[21] says that actions of *jīvas* are without a beginning. Even before this creation, in other former states of creation, merits and demerits of actions of *jīvas* were present. In the present creation Brahman engages *jīvas* in meritorious and demeritorious actions depending on the merits and demerits of past actions. That the present creation is not a sudden phenomenon, that the process of creation is without a beginning, is evident in the Upaniṣadic and Smṛti statement that God creates the present sun and moon in accordance with the sun and moon of previous creations. ("*Sūryācandramasau dhātā yathā- pūrvamakalpayat*". As quoted in *Nimbārkābhāṣya* of B.S. 2.1.34.)

Jīva's enjoyment is also his / her natural action. Even in deep sleep the *jīva* does not cease to enjoy. The reason is, after waking up a person remembers: 'I slept happily'. He / she has recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of the form, "I who am now awake slept happily'. The Upaniṣads and *Brahmasūtra* state that even the liberated *jīvas* act and enjoy. With regard to the liberated self the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* states that he in that state travels, takes food, plays and loves.[22] If he resolves to see his forefathers, the souls of the forefathers appear to him as soon as he resolves.[23] *Brahmasūtra* also states that the liberated self resides in a subtle body,[24] and his resolves necessarily become true.[25]

III

Refutation Of Advaita *Ekajīvavāda* And Establishing The Plurality of *Jīvas*

As the Nimbārkist sees it, since Brahman's power of consciousness, by manifesting which He creates the *jīvas* is infinite, *jīvas* are also infinite. The Nimbārkist quotes the following Upaniṣadic statements in favour of his view that *jīvas* are multiple and infinite:

(i) "*Sa cānantyāya kalpate*." (He is fit to be infinite. Śvet. Up. 5.9.)

(ii) "*Yo yo devānāṃ pratyabuddhyata sa eva tadabhavat, tatharṣīṇāṃ tathā manuṣyāṇām*". (Those among the *devas*, *ṛṣis* and men who know Brahman, become Brahman. Bṛhad. Up. 1.4.17.)

(iii) "*Nityo nityānāṃ cetanaścetanānām*". (He is the eternal of the eternals, consciousness of the conscious beings, Kaṭha. Up. 2.2.13.)

From the above Upaniṣadic statements it can be established that *jīvas* are multiple and infinite. If *jīvas* are not many Upaniṣadic use of words like '*manuṣyāṇām*', '*nityānām*', '*cetanānām*, which are used in their plural forms, would not have been justified. However, Advatins like Madhusūdana Saraswati are of the opinion that since the nescience, the limiting condition of *jīva*, is one, *jīva* reflected in it is one. The Nimbārkist, however argues that there is no Vedic or Upaniṣadic statement to the effect that there is only one *jīva*. The Advaitin may argue that though *jīva* is really one, yet due to his connection with many conditions, many *antaḥkaraṇas*, which limit the pure Brahman-consciousness, *jīvas* appear to be many. Since the Nimbārka rejection of *avaccheda* (limitation) of Brahman due to conditions has already been mentioned earlier, we refrain from repeating it here.

According to the Nimbārkist, the theory of one *jīva* leads to absurdities. On the assumption of *jīva* being one, we would be forced to admit that when one *jīva* is asleep, unconscious, dead or attains liberation, all other *jīvas* would simultaneously be asleep, unconscious, dead or liberated. Moreover, the feelings of one *jīva* would be felt by another. The consequences of actions committed by one *jīva* would have to be reaped by another. The absurdity cannot be ruled out by saying that *jivas* are different, since they have different *antaḥkaraṇas*, which condition the universal consciousness of Brahman. Although a *jīva's* hands and feet are different from one another, yet, whatever is felt by them is felt by the *jīva* as a whole.

If *jīva* is one, the relation between a preceptor and his pupil becomes inconceivable. If the preceptor's consciousness is one differenceless non-dual consciousness, he would have no knowledge of the pupil being different from himself, and he would have no intention to preach. Hence, it must be concluded that *jīvas* are infinite in number.[26]

IV

Jīva Is Atomic in Magnitude

According to the Nimbārkist, *jīvas* are atomic in magnitude (*aṇu-parimāṇa*)[27]. He quotes the following statements from the Upaniṣads, the *Gītā* and *Śrimadbhāgavata* in support of his view:

(i) "*Eṣo' ṇurātmā cetasā veditavyaḥ*". (This atomic self is to be known by mind. Mund. Up. 3.1.9.)

(ii) "*Vālāgraśatabhāgasya śatadhākalpitasya ca /*
Bhāgo jīvaḥ sa vijñeyaḥ sa cānantyāya kalpate" //
(*Jīva* is known as of the size of an imagined hundredth part of the tip of a hair. He is fit to be of the hundredth part of the infinite. Śvet. Up. 5.9.)

(iii) "*Aṇupramāṇāt*". (As *jīva* is known as being atomic in magnitude. Kaṭha. Up. 1.2.8)

(iv) "*Sukṣmāṇāmapyahaṃ jīvaḥ*" (I am the *jīva* among those who are very subtle. *Śrīmadbhāgavata*, 11.16.11).

In the above quotations the atomicity of the *jīva* is clearly described. Even in Brahmasūtras 2.3.19[28] to 2.3.31 the atomicity of the *jīva* has been described.[29]

A question arises in this context. How can the atomic *jīva* which resides in the heart,[30] be aware of the sensations felt in different parts of the whole body, and feel the consequent pleasures and pains? The answer to this question can be found, the Nimbārkist urges, in *sūtras* 2.3.23[31] to 2.3.26 of *Brahmasūtra*. These *sūtras* state that just as the scent of a drop of sandalwood paste pervades the whole body, and just as the light of a small lamp lighted in a corner illuminates the whole big room, and as the perfume of a flower travels far and wide, in the same way, the atomic *jīva* in the heart pervades the whole body. Although the *jīva* is atomic, yet he has knowledge of whatever is happening in all parts of the body. *Jīva* is aware of the sensations occurring in the whole body. It is thus evident that although the *jīva* is atomic, yet his consciousness and knowledge pervades the whole body.

Śaṃkarācārya, however, is of the opinion that the *sūtras* quoted above (B.S. 2.3.19-27) merely express the view of the opponent which the author of *Bṛhmasūtra* rejects.[32] Thus, in Śaṃkarācārya's view, the author of *Brhmasūtra* does not conclude that the *jīva* is atomic in magnitude. The view that *jīva* is atomic is held by the opponent. According to the author of *Brahmasūtra*, the *jīva* is all-pervasine (*vibhu*).

Neither the Nimbārkist, nor Rāmānujācārya (or his followers) admits the all-pervasiveness of the *jīva*. The Nimbārkist argues that if the *jīva* is all-pervasive, then his going out of the

body (*utkrānti*), his going to the other *loka* (*gati*), and his return from the other *loka* to this one (*āgati*) would not be comprehensible.[33] Yet, the Upaniṣads and Smṛtis speak of the passing away of the *jīva* into other *lokas* and his coming back to this world.[34]

Śaṃkarācārya, in his commentary on B.S. 2.3.28 maintains that the *sūtra* 2.3.19 ("*Utkrāntigatyāgatīnām*") does not describe the passing away of the *jīva* from this *loka*. The *sūtra* really speaks of the passage of the *buddhi*. However, the Nimbārkist points out that Śaṃkarācārya does not quote any Upaniṣad and Smṛti in support of his view. In fact, there is no such texts regarding the passage of the *buddhi* in Upaniṣads and Smṛtis. On the other hand, the Nimbārkist says that B.S. 2.3.20, "*Svātmanā cottarayoḥ*" shows that the *jīvātman* himself performs the actions of 'going to' and 'coming back'.

The Nimbārkist speaks of several inconsistencies vitiating the view that the *jīva* is all-pervading. Such an all-pervading *jīva* will have contact with the minds of all other *jīvas*. As a result, a particular *jīva* will be able to know the minds of all other different *jīvas*, and will feel the sensations of other *jīvas* as his own. There will thus be no difference of knowledge of 'myself' from that of 'yourself'.

Some *jīvas* feel happy, some others feel unhappy. Some *jīvas* have little knowledge, some others are more knowledgeable. Such differences cannot be explained if the *jīva* is supposed to be all-pervading and hence to be connected with the *antaḥkaraṇa* of all other *jīvas*. Moreover, if the *jīvā* is all-pervading he cannot be said to have a proper transition from the state of bondage to that of liberation.

The difference between the *jīva* and Brahman, as indicated in the Upaniṣadic and *Brahmasūtra* texts[35] cannot be maintained if the *jīva* is supposed to be all-pervading. The omniscience and all-pervasiveness of Brahman distinguish Him

from the *jīva* who has limited knowledge and limited magnitude. From all this, the Nimbārkist concludes, that *jīva* is atomic.

V

Jīva As Part Is Both Different And Non-different From Brahman

According to the Nimbārkist, *jīva* as part of Brahman, is of atomic size. As part of all-pervading Brahman, *jīva* cannot be all-pervading. We have already demonstrated[36] how, in the Nimbārka view, *jīva* is conceived as a part of Brahman in the sense that he /she is the transformed form of Brahman's power of *cit*.[37] That *jīvas* are parts of Brahman is demonstrated in the following Upaniṣadic, *Gītā* and *Brahmasūtra* statements.

(i) "*Aṃśo nānā vyapadeśāt*". (B.S. 2.3.42.)

(ii) "*Pādo' sya viśvābhūtāni*". (Chānd. Up. 3.12.6.)

(iii) "*Aṃśo' hyeṣa parasya*".(Quoted in the *Vedāntakaustubha* commentary on B.S. 2.3.42.)

(iv) "*Mamaivāṃśo jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*". (*Gītā*, 15.7)

Being parts of Brahman, *jīvas* are both different from and identical with Brahman. We have already shown (see pp. 8-10) how the Nimbārkist explains that the relation between *jīva* and Brahman is specifically shown to be one of *bhedābheda* in the B.S. 2.3.42. ("*Aṃśo nānā vypadeśādanyathā cāpi dāśakitavāditvamadhīyata eke*".)

Nimbārkācārya, in his commentary on this particular *sūtra*, says that the difference between Brahman and *jīva* is established in stating that Brahman is omniscient and *jīva* is of limited knowledge; Brahman is the Lord and *jīva* is the ruled.[38] At the same time, the identity of *jīva* with Brahman is established in stating, 'Thou art that'. Since the Upaniṣadic statements are of equal strength, the relation between Brahman and *jīva* is to be treated as one of *bhedābheda*.

Since *jīva* is supposed by the Nimbārkist to be a trans-

formation of Brahman's power of *cit*, and since power is related to the substratum of power by the *bhedābheda* relation, *jīva* is both different from and identical with Brahman, the locus of power. The Upaniṣads specifically point out that *jīva* is Brahman's power: "*Aṃśo hi śaktirūpo, grāhyaḥ. Eṣo parasya śaktiḥ*".

Viṣṇupurāṇa and *Gītā* also describe *jīva* as the power of Brahman:

"*Etat sarvamidaṃ viśvaṃ jagadetaccarācaram /*
Parabrahmasvarūpasya viṣṇoḥ śaktisamanvitam" //

(The entire world, consisting of the moving and the unmoving is possessed of the power of *parabrahma*, Viṣṇu. *Viṣṇupurāṇa* 6.7.60.)

"*Apareyamitastvanyāṃ prakṛtiṃ viddhi me parām /*
Jīvabhūtāṃ mahāvāho yayedaṃ dhāryate jagat //

[Know the other *prakṛti* by which the *jagat* is held in me, as my *parā-prakṛti* (power) in the form of the *jīvas*. *Gītā*, 7.5.]

Śrīnivāsācarya, in his commentary on a Brahmasūtra says:

" '*Jīvo' lpaśaktirasvatantro 'varaḥ*', '*jñājñau*' '*dvāvājavīśānīśau*'— *ityādi bhedābhe- davyapadeśaḥ*. '*Tattvamasi*', '*Ayamātmā brahma*' . . . *ityādyabhedavyapadeśaḥ*. *Ubhaya- vidhavākyānāṃ tulyavalatvāt jīvaparamātmanoḥ svābhāvikau bhedābhedau bhavata ityarthaḥ*". ['*Jīva* is of limited power and is not independent', 'Brahman is omniscient. *Jīva* is of limited knowledge. They are both unborn. One is the Lord, the other is the ruled'. All these statements indicate *bhedābheda* relation between *jīva* and Brahman. Statements like, 'Thou art that', 'This self is Brahman' — indicate the identity of *jīva* and Brahman. Since the statements (indicating *bheda* and *abheda* between *jīva* and

Brahman) are equally strong, it follows that the relation between *jīva* and Brahman is one of *bhedābheda* (difference-cum-identity). Commentary called *Vedāntakaustubha*, *sūtra*, 2.2.42.]

Nimbārkācārya in his commentary on several Brahmasūtras says:

(i) "*Sarvabhinnābhinno bhagavān vāsudevo viśvātmaiva jijñāsāviṣayaḥ*". (Brahman is different from and identical with all *jīvas* and the whole world. He is *Vāsudeva*, the soul of the world. He is the object of enquiry. Commentary on B.S. 1.1.4.)

(ii) "*Brahmābhinno'pi kṣetrajñaḥ svasvarūpeṇa bhinna eva*". (Although the individual selves are actually non-different from Brahman, yet as being endowed with different names and forms, they are also different from Brahman. Commentary on B.S. 2.1.22.)

(iii) "*Avibhāge'pi samudra-taraṅgayoriva sūryatatprabhayoriva tayor-vibhāgaḥ syāt*". (Just as the sea and its waves are both different and identical, just as the sun and its light are both different and identical, in the same way *jīva* and Brahman are both different and identical. Commentary on B.S. 2.1.13.)

It is thus obvious that according to the Nimbārkist, *jīva's* relation with Brahman is one of *bhedābheda*. *Jīva*, as part of Brahman, is both different from and identical with Brahman. A part cannot exist apart from the whole, hence it is non-different from the whole. Yet, the whole is not exhausted in the parts. As something over and above the parts, the whole is also different from the parts.

According to Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa, the Upaniṣadic and Smṛti texts regarding the difference of *jīva* from Brahman really point out the dependent existence (*paratantrasattā*) of *jīvas*.

The texts showing the identity of *jīvas* with Brahman, however, point out, Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa says, that Brahman as the whole consisting of *jīvas* and *jagat* as His parts, has an independent existence (*svatantrasattā*), not exhausted in the existence of the parts, *jīvas* and *jagat*.[39]

It is to be noted that even Śaṃkarācārya, on certain occasions, in his commentary on *Brahmasūtra*, suggests that the relation between Brahman and *jīva* is one of *bhedābheda*, and that *jīva* is Brahman's part, although this is not his confirmed view. (Śaṃkarācārya's confirmed view is that *jīva* is identical with Brahman. The misconception that *jīva* is different from Brahman is due to ignorance.) Commenting on B.S. 2.3.42,[40] Śaṃkarācārya writes: "*So'nveṣṭavyaḥ, sa vijijñāsitavayaḥ . . . iti caivañjātīyako bheda-nirdeśo nāsati bhede yujyate . . . Anyathā cāpi vyapadeśo bhavatyanānātvasya pratipādakaḥ . . . Ato bhedābhedā-vagamābhyāṃśatvā-vagamaḥ*". ['He ought to be sought for'; 'He ought to be enquired into' — statements of this sort indicating difference are not proper without difference (between *jīva* and Brahman). There are other statements which establish the non-difference (of *jīva* from Brahman) . . . Hence, from the assumption of difference-cum-identity, *jīvas* are considered to be parts (of Brahman). Commentary on B.S. 2.3.42]

In the commentary on the next two Brahmasūtras (B.S. 2.3.43-44) Śaṃkarācārya suggests that *jīvas* are parts of Brahman, as this is indicated in the Upaniṣadic text, "*Pādo'sya viśvābhūtāni*" and in the *Gītā* text, "*Mamaivāṃśo jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*". Moreover, in his commentary on, "*Adhikaṃ tu bhedanirdeśāt*" (B.S. 2.1.21), Śaṃkarācārya admits that this *sūtra* suggests that Brahman is more than the *jīva*. Thus, those who say that in Śaṃkarācārya's opinion there is no difference between *jīva* and Brahman should take special notice of the sort of commentaries quoted above.

In this commentary on the *śūtra*, "*Ubhayavyapadeśāt-tvahikuṇḍalavat*" (B.S. 3.2.27), Śaṃkarācārya writes that some Upaniṣads speak of the difference between Brahman and *jīva*, while some others speak of the identity of the two. Just as the serpent and its coil are both different from each other and also non-different, in the same way Brahman is both different from the *jīva* and also non-different from him.

Nimbārka Criticism of The Advaita View That Difference of *Jīvas* From Brahman Is From The Practical Point of View.

The Advaitins may say that the difference between *jīvas* and Brahman admitted by Śaṃkarācārya is only a difference based on the practical point of view. In their view the Upaniṣadic texts show the difference between *jīva* and Brahman from the empirical point of view. The Nimbārkist objects to this Advaita interpretation. He says that since the knowledge of the difference based on the practical viewpoint is always contradicted by the proper knowledge of Brahman, the texts pointing out such a difference would thus be said to be the source of invalid cognition (*apramāṇa*). But the Advaitin does not maintain that the Upaniṣadic texts are the source of invalid cognition. Moreover, the Advaitin cannot advocate that the difference between *jīvas* and Brahman is an imaginary one. As the imaginary entity is unreal, the texts establishing the imaginary difference would be a source of invalid cognition.[41]

The Advaitin tries to stick to his gun by pointing out that the texts showing the difference, speak of the difference revealed in perceptual cognition. The Nimbārkist combats the Advaitin by arguing that perception grasps only the present. Perception cannot grasp the difference existing in the past,

present and future states. Yet, the Upaniṣads and the *Gītā* speak of the difference between *jīva* and Brahman at all three times — past, present and future. Consider, for example, the following *Gītā* text;

"*Na tvevāhaṃ jātu nāsaṃ na tvaṃ neme janādhipāḥ /*
Na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ sarve vayamataḥparam //

(It is not that I, or you, or these kings were non-existent. It is not that all of us will not exist after this". *Gītā*, 2.12.)

Words like 'I', 'you', 'these kings' establish the multiplicity of individual *jīvas*. This multiplicity cannot be established without the *jīvas* being different from Brahman. Hence the difference of *jīvas* from Brahman is established in this *śloka*. And this *śloka* is concerned with difference in the past, present and future. Thus the difference indicated in this *Gītā* text is a difference in past, present and future. And such a difference is not grasped by perception.[42]

Even, when the *jīvas* are liberated, they remain different from Brahman. Brahmasūtra 4.4.17[43] states that except the power to create, sustain and dissolve the world, the liberated *jīvas* attain all other similar qualities of Brahman. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* states that, after discarding this body the liberated *jīva* attains the illuminating Brahman and is established in his own form (as consciousness). Being established with Brahman (*uttamapuruṣa*) the liberated *jīva* enjoys many things. He pertakes of food, travels, plays and loves. ("*Asmāccharīrāt samutthāya paraṃ jyotirūpasampadya svena rūpeṇābhiniṣpadyate; sa uttamapuruṣaḥ, sa tatra paryyeti jakṣan krīḍan, ramamānaḥ*". Chānd. Up. 8.12.3).[44] Thus in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* the liberated *jīva* has been described as enjoyer. Even in the liberated state the *jīva* does not lose his power of acting and enjoying. The enjoyer *jīva*

must thus be admitted to be different from Brahman.

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* says that the liberated *jīva* enjoys all sorts of desired objects with Brahman. ("*So'śnute sarvān kāmān saha brahmaṇā vipaścitā*". Tait. Up. 2.1.) In this statement the liberated *jīva* is said to have similarity with Brahman only regarding enjoyment of desired objects. *Jīvas* do not possess Brahman's power of creation, sustenance and destruction. Thus there is difference of liberated *jīvas* from Brahman.

Jīva's difference from Brahman is thus seen to persist even in liberation. This difference exists in all three times. Yet, neither the difference at the state of liberation, nor the difference in all three times is capable of being perceived. Thus the Advaita contention that the texts showing the difference speak of perceivable difference, cannot be admitted to be true.

VI

Bhedābheda-vāda Is Based On Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* And *Gītā*

According to the Nimbārkist, the relation between *jīva* and Brahman, as shown earlier (pp.6-15, 124-128), is one of *bhedābheda*. We will now briefly show that the theory of *bhedābheda* is based on the Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* and the *Gītā*.

In B.S. (3.2.27), "*Ubhayavyapadeśāt-tvahikuṇḍal-avat*", the relation between Brahman and *jīva-jagat* has been shown to be one of *bhedābheda*. But how can two things be both different from one another and also non-different? In answering this question the above *sūtra* gives the example of a serpent and its coil. In interpreting the above *sūtra* Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa says that there is a natural (*svābhāvika*) difference in a coiled serpent between the serpent and its coiled

form. (The serpent's coiled and uncoiled forms manifest themselves at different times.) The coil in itself is different from the serpent itself. Yet, as the coiled form is essentially a form of the serpent, it is inseparable from the latter; it is non-different from the latter. As being located in the serpent (*sarpādheya*) and as being pervaded by the serpent (*sarpavyāpya*), the coil is inseparable from the serpent. Similarly, there is a natural difference between Brahman and *jīva-jagat*. Brahman is the cause. *Jīva-jagat* owe their existence to the cause. Hence *jīva-jagat* have a dependent existence (*paratantra-sattā*). Brahman, on the other hand, has an independent existence (*svatantra-sattā*.) Hence, *jīva-jagat* are naturally different from Brahman, the cause. Yet, as *jīva-jagat* are essentially the effect of Brahman, they are inseparable from Brahman, they are non-different from Brahman. As being located in Brahman, their material cause (*brahmādheya = kāraṇādheya*), and as being dependent for their existence on the cause (*kāraṇāyattasattāka*) *jīva-jagat* are inseparable from Brahman. Hence, *jīva-jagat* are naturally non-different from Brahman.[45]

That *jīvas* are both different from Brahman and non-different from Him, the Nimbārkist points out, is established from Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* and the *Gītā*. Brahmasūtra, 3.2.28, "*Prakāśāśrayavadvā tejastvāt*" states that the relation of *jīvas* with Brahman is like that between the sunlight and its locus, the sun. There is a natural difference between the sun and its light. Yet, since the sun is the locus of its light, the latter is inseparable from the former. Similarly, *jīvas* are naturally different from Brahman and yet non different from Him. *Jīvas* are dependent on Brahman, atomic in size and have limited knowledge. Hence they are different from the independent, omniscient and all-pervading Brahman. Yet, as they are parts of Brahman, located in Brahman (*brahmādheya*) and pervaded by Brahman (*brahmavyāpya*), they are indistinguishable from Him. Hence, *jīvas* are naturally both and non-different from

Brahman.[46]

The Upaniṣads also, the Nimbārkist points out, speak of the *bhedābheda* relation: "*Tatastu taṃ paśyati niṣkalaṃ dhyāyamānaḥ*". (After that, the meditating one perceives the partless Brahman. Mund. Up. 3,1,8.) This text shows the difference between the meditating person and the object of meditation. The *Taittīrīya Upaniṣad* states, "*Brahmavidāpnoti paraṃ*". (The knower of Brahman attains Brahman. Tait. Up. Brahmānandavallī, 2.) This text shows the difference between *jīva*, the attainer and Brahman, the attained. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* states: "*Ya ātmānamantaro yamayati*". (He who controls the self from within). This text shows the difference between *jīvas*, the controlled and Brahman, the controller. There are other Upaniṣadic texts which show the non-difference between *jīvas* and Brahman. "*Tattvamasi*", "*Ahaṃ brahmāsmi*", "*Sarvaṃ khalvidaṃ brahma*", "*Ayamātmā brahma*", "*Aitādātmyamidaṃ sarvam*"[47] — all these texts show the non-difference of *jīvas* and Brahman. It is thus obvious that the Upaniṣads intend to project the relation between *jīvas* and Brahman to be one of *bhedābheda*.

The *Gītā* also speaks of the *bhedābheda* between *jīva* and Brahman: "*Ekatvena pṛthaktvena vahudhā viśvatomukham*". (Some worship me as being identical with them, some as different from them. Some, however, worship me in many ways as God, the source of the universe. *Gītā*, 9.15.)

VII

Objection To *Bhedābheda-vada* And Nimbārka Defence

It may be objected that Nimbārka theory of *bhedābheda* is based on the conception that *jīvas* are parts of Brahman. Yet Brahman is described in the Upaniṣads as partless (*niṣkala*). Thus *jīva-jagat* cannot be parts of Brahman.

The Nimbārkist argues that *jīva-jagat* are parts of Brah-

man in the sense that *jīva* represents His power of *ānanda*. (Powers can be said to be parts of the *śaktimān*, the powerful one). A pot or a cloth can be divided into different parts. *Jīva* and *jagat* are not such parts of Brahman. The Upaniṣads and *Viṣṇupurāṇa* describe *jīva* and *jagat* as parts of Brahman in the sense of his powers:

(i)"*Eṣaḥ parasya śaktiḥ*", "*Jīvo'lpaśaktirasva-tantrah*". (See p. 125)

(ii) "*Etat sarvamidaṃ viśvaṃ jagadetaccarācaram / Parabrahma-svarūpasya viṣnoḥ śaktisaman-vitam*". //

(*Visṇupurāṇa*, 6.7.60-61. See p. 128)

The sun is not divided into parts by its light. Yet the sunlight is, in a sense, a part of the sun. And between the sun's rays and the sun there is a *bhedābheda* relation.

Another possible objection to the theory of *bhedābheda* is to the effect that, since *jivas* are natural indistinguishable parts of Brahman, the defects of *jīvas* will also be Brahman's defects. And the happiness and suffering felt by *jīvas* will also be felt by Brahman. In answer to such an objection, the Nimbārkist points out that Brahman does not suffer the consequences of actions performed by *jīvas*. Because, in Nimbārkācārya's opinion, difference between the essence of *jīvas* and Brahman is also admitted, the objection quoted above is not a valid one, as far as the Nimbārka view is concerned.

In fact Brahmasūtra 2.3.45, "*Prakāśādivattu naivaṃ paraḥ*", says that the rays of the sun touch impurities like excrement and urine. But the sun is not touched by such impurities. In the same way, only the parts of Brahman, the *jīvas*, suffer the consequences of their actions. But Brahman Himself does not suffer the consequences of these actions.

The next Brahmasūtra, 2.3.46, "*Smaranti ca*", also Nimbārkācārya shows, says that the sages describe that Brah-

man does not feel suffering like the *jīvas*. Nimbārkācārya shows that the sages' description is based on the Upaniṣads and Smṛtis:

(i) "*Tatra yaḥ paramātmā'sau sa nityo nirguṇaḥ smṛtaḥ*". (The Smṛti says that He who is *paramātman* = Brahman, is eternal and without despicable qualities.)

(ii) "*Na lipyate phalaiścāpi padmapatramivāmbhasā*". (He is not polluted by the results of actions, as the leaf of a lotus does not become wet through its contact with water.)

VIII

Nimbārka Rejection Of The Advaita Interpretation Of The *Mahāvākya*, "*Tattvamasi*"

The Nimbārkist explains the *mahāvākya*,[48] "*Tattvamasi*", (Thou art that), in accordance with his theory of *bhedābheda*. This explanation differs from the Advaita interpretation. The Advaitin speaks of the complete identity of *jīva* and Brahman with the help of the *mahāvākya*, "*Tattvamasi*". The word, '*tat*' signifies, in his opinion, Brahman qualified by *sarvajñatva* (omniscience) and *sarvaśaktimattva* (omnipotence) etc. The word, '*tvam*', signifies the *jīva*, who has the qualities of *asarvajñatva* and *alpaśaktimattva* (being of limited knowledge and power). Yet, since *sarvajñatva* and *asarvajñatva* are opposed to each other, it is not possible to establish the identity of Brahman and *jīva* who have these qualities. The Advaitin argues that the identity of the *jīva* and Brahman is to be established by discarding the *viśeṣaṇas* (adjectives) of *sarvajñatva* and *asarvajñatva* of Brahman and *jīva* signified by the words, '*tat*' and '*tvam*', and retaining only the *viśeṣya* (noun) part of the words, '*tat*' and '*tvam*'. The *viśeṣya* (noun) part of the words is pure consciousness. (*śuddha-caitanya*). Hence, *jīva* and Brahman are said to be identical in the sense that both of them are pure consciousness. The Advaitin here adopts the technique known as *bhāgatyāgalakṣaṇā*.[49] According to this technique, a

sentence is to be understood by interpreting its words as indirectly signifying something which is not directly signified by them. By this technique the adjectival imports of the words are to be discarded and the sentence is to be interpreted as signifying only the nominative parts of its words. The adjectival part of the word, '*tat*', *sarvajñatva*, is discarded by the Avaitin, and only the nominative part, namely, pure consciousness, is retained. Similarly, the adjectival part of the word, '*tvam*', namely, *alpajñata*, is discarded, and only the nominative part, pure consciousness, is retained. Thus pure consciousness becomes the *lakṣaṇārtha* of the words, '*tat*' and '*tvam*'. In this way the Advaitin establishes the identity of *jīva* and Brahman by the *mahāvākya*, "*Tattvamasi*".

The Nimbārkist, however, does not agree with the Advaita interpretation of "*Tattvamasi*". According to him, only an object having quality and action can be connoted by a word. Since Brahman, as pure consciousness, is attributeless, according to the Advaita interpretation, It cannot be the connotation of any word. If Brahman could be connoted by any word, It would cease to be attributeless.

There are several inconsistencies in the *bhāgatyāgalakṣaṇā* view advocated by the Advaitin. According to this view, the *lakṣaṇārtha* or indirect / secondary meaning of a word is that which is necessarily or inseparably connected with (*avinābhūta*) the primary meaning. It cannot exist without the primary meaning. Since the bank of the Ganges is necessarily connected with (*avinābhūta*) the Ganges, 'the bank' can be said to be the indirect meaning of 'the Ganges', in the sentence, "the milkman lives in the Ganges".[50] The primary meaning of the word, '*tat*' is Brahman qualified by omniscience, omnipotence etc. However, the advocate of the *bhāgatyāgalakṣaṇā* view takes pure consciousness as the indirect meaning of the word '*tat*'. Pure consciousness, according

to this view, thus becomes that which is necessarily connected with the primary meaning of '*tat*', the omniscient and omnipotent Brahman. It transpires that, according to the *bhāgatyāgalakṣaṇā* view, qualified Brahman is that without which the attributeless Brahman cannot exist. This view, however, is contrary to Śaṃkarācārya's opinion. In Śaṃkarācārya's opinion qualified Brahman is dependent on attributeless Brahman. Unless the attributeless Brahman is established, qualified Brahman cannot be conceived at all. Ignorant people imagine unqualified Brahman as qualified. If unqualified Brahman is dependent on something else, It cannot be said to be unqualified (*nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa*).[51]

The words, '*tat*' and '*tvam*' in the *mahavākya*, "*Tattvamasi*", indirectly signify only the noun, pure consciousness. Similarly, "*Satyaṃ jñānamanantaṃ brahma*", according to the Advaitin, signify only the noun, pure consciousness.[52] This pure consciousness is, according to the Advaitin, also known by perception. The Nimbārkist points out that since pure consciousness is known both by the statement, "*Satyaṃ jñānamanantaṃ brahma*", and from perception, the preaching of the *mahāvākya*, "*Tattvamasi*", would be futile.[53]

The Advaitin treats the *mahāvākya*, "*Tattvamasi*" as an *akhaṇḍārthaka* sentence. In such a sentence the meaning obtained consists only of one element that alone is retained, and not of two or more elements related together. An *akhaṇḍārthaka* sentence is that which is a source of valid cognition without the knowledge of the relation between the words of that sentence. *Akhaṇḍārthaka* sentence is defined as: "*Aparyāya-śabdānāṃ padavṛtti-smārītātirikta-saṃsargāgocara-pramājanakatvaṃ, teṣām-ekaprātipādikārthamātraparyavasāyitaṃ vā*".[54] [That sentence, which is the source of a certain meaning which has no connection with the relation existing among the meanings of non-synonymous words of that sen-

tence, is an *akhaṇḍārthaka* sentence. The other characteristic of an *akhaṇḍārthaka* sentence is that it is a sentence the meaning of whose non-synonymous words are all reduced to the meaning of the base of one nominative word (*prātipādika*).] All the words of the *mahāvākya*, "*Tattvamasi*" thus generate only the sense of pure consciousness = pure Brahman.

The Nimbārkist does not admit any sentence to be *akhaṇḍārthaka*. All sentences are, in his opinion, indicative of the relatedness of the meanings of words constituting the sentences. To be meaningful, a sentence must fulfil certain conditions. The conditions are: *ākāṃkṣā* (desire after completion), *yogyatā* (compatibility), *sannidhi* (proximity), and *tātparya* (intention).

Let us concentrate on the condition of *ākāṃkṣā*. When a particular word of a sentence is uttered, for example, the word, 'head', there arises in the hearer a desire to know, 'whose head is it'? This is the desire for the completion of the meaning. This desire is fulfilled when the word, 'Rāma's head' is heard by the hearer. This shows that the words of a sentence are related; and unless the relation is understood, the sentence cannot be meaningful. *Ākāṃkṣā* is thus a necessary condition for the meaningfulness of a sentence. However, a sentence containing words whose meanings are not related to each other cannot have *ākaṃkṣā* as its necessary condition. On the basis of this reasoning, the Nimbārkist argues that "*Tattvamasi*" is not an *akhaṇḍārthaka* sentence. It is a sentence whose meaning emerges from the understanding of the relation of the meanings of separate words. It is thus a *sakhaḍarthaka* sentence. [55]

Even if we concentrate on the other characteristic of *akhaṇḍārthaka* sentence, viz. 'the sentence, meaning of whose words are all reduced to the meaning of the base of one nominative word (*prātipādika*)', a sentence regarding Brahman does not become *akhaṇḍārthaka* sentence. '*Brahman*' is a *yaugika* word referring to an entity having greatness. Since the *yaugika*

word, '*Brahman*', is formed by the combination of the verb, '*bṛha / bṛhi*',[56] which is the root (*prakṛti*), plus the *pratyaya*, '*man*', it is not an *akhaṇḍārthaka* word. As a consequence of this, the Nimbārkist contends, a sentence containing the word, '*Brahman*' which itself is a *sakhaṇḍārthaka* word (having different parts), must be treated as a *sakhaṇḍārthaka* sentence. The Upaniṣads themselves speak of the greatness of Brahman by indicating that It is the locus of the great quality like omniscience.[57] Thus, a sentence referring to Brahman is a *sakhaṇḍārthaka* sentence.[58]

As a commonsensical example of an *akhaṇḍārthaka* sentence, the Advaitin cites the sentence, "*So'yaṃ devadattaḥ*", which results from the recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) that this is the same Devadatta seen earlier. The Nimbārkist, however, argues that in this case of recognition, Devadatta is qualified by two characteristics. Past Devadatta is characterised as being limited to the past (*tatkālāvacchinna*). Present Devadatta is characterised as being limited to the present (*etatkālāvacchinna*). Since a characterised Devadatta is the object of knowledge due to the sentence, '*So'yaṃ devadattaḥ*', the sentence itself cannot be an *akhaṇḍārthaka* sentence.

Since the concerned recognition refers to 'thisness' (*idantā*) of the present Devadatta and to 'thatness' (*tattvā*) of the past Devadatta, it is a cognition of an object having specific forms (*saprakārikā-pratīti*). Only a cognition of an object without any specific form (*niṣprakārikā-pratīti*) can be *akhaṇḍārthaka*. However, unless recognition refers to 'thisness' (*idantā*) and 'thatness' (*tattvā*), it cannot be different from perception. Hence, recognition cannot be *akhaṇḍārthaka*.[59]

The Nimbārkist explains the "*Tattvamasi*" *mahāvākya* with the help of his theory of *bhedābheda*. The texts speaking of the difference of the *jīva* from Brahman intend to show that the *jīva* is a dependent existence (*paratantra-sattā*). (In this

sense it is different from Brahman whose existence is independent, *svatantrasattāka*.) The texts speaking of the non-difference of the *jīva* and Brahman intend to show that the *svatantrasattāka* is the essence of all other existents like *jīva* and *jagat*, which owe their existence to Him.

"*Tattvamasi*" expresses the view that the existence of *jīvas* is dependent on their cause, Brahman. Brahman is the locus (*ādhāra*) in which *jīvas* are located. As located beings (*ādheya*) *jīvas* are inseparable from their locus. In this sense *jīvas* are said to be non-different from Brahman. As pervaded beings, *jivas* are inseparable from the pervader Brahman. In this sense *jīvas* are said to be non-different from Brahman. The Nimbārkist says that if *jīvas* are said to be completely identical with Brahman in all respects, the Upaniṣadic statements showing the difference of *jīvas* from Brahman would be bereft of their imports.[60]

That "*Tattvamasi*" does not, according to the Nimbārkist, preach total identity of *jīvas* and Brahman, but, instead, preaches that *jīvas* are both different from and identical with Brahman, is emphatically stated by Swami Santadas. He says that "*Tattvamasi*" only states that *jīvas* are essentially the same as Brahman. Just as clay is the essence of pots, in the same way Brahman is the essence of *jīvas*. However, the existence of clay is not exhausted in that of the pots. Similarly, the existence of Brahman is not exhausted in that of the *jīvas*. In Brahmasūtra 2.1.21, Brahman is indicated as the pervader of *jīvas*. Brahman is thus greater than the *jīvas*. Just as the relation between a whole and its parts is that of *bhedābheda*, similarly, the relation between Brahman and *jīvas* is that of *bhedābheda*.[61]

IX

The Nimbārka View Of *Jīvas* As Eternal

In determining the essence of *jīvas*, the author of

Brahmasūtra says: "*Carācara-vyapāśrayas-tu syāt-tadvyapadeśo bhāktas-tadbhāva-bhāvitvāt*". B.S. 2.3.16.

According to this *sūtra*, birth and death of *jīvas* are spoken of in the Upaniṣads and Smṛtis in a secondary sense. The words, 'birth' and 'death' have not been used in the Upaniṣads and Smṛtis in the primary sense. *Jīva's* association and dissociation with the body are meant by the words, 'birth' and 'death' of *jīvas*. That *jīva* is eternal has been clearly stated in Upaniṣads, Smṛtis and *Brahmsūtra*. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, for example, says that *jīva* is the eternal of the eternals, consciousness of the conscious beings. ("*Nityo nityānāṃ cetanaścetanānām*". Śvet. Up. 6. 13.) The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* says: "O (Maitreyī)! *Ātaman* is naturally indestructible, and hence undecaying". ("*Avināśī vā are ayamātmānucchitidharmā*". Bṛad. Up. 4.5.14). The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* further says: "The consciousness / knowledge of the conscious *ātman* never has any cessation, as it is indestructible". ("*Na hi vijñātur-vijñāterviparilopo vidyate'vināśitvāt*". Bṛhad. Up. 4.3.30.) The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* says: "*Jīva* is neither born, nor does he/she die. He/she is not born from something. He/she is unborn, eternal, permanent. He/she exists from time immemorial. He/she does not die even if the body is killed".[62] Brahmasūtra 2.3.17 states: "*Ātman* has no origin, since the Upaniṣads do not speak of its origin. Upaniṣads speak of its eternality". ("*Nātmā' śruternityatvācca tābhyaḥ*".)

X

The Nimbārka View Of Liberated *Jīvas*

Jīvas are born again and again to reap the consequences of their actions prompted by *avidyā*. Being born, they suffer as a result of their past actions. This constitutes bondage for them. With the attainment of knowledge of Brahman, ignorance is destroyed, and a knower of Brahman transcends delusion and suffering, and enjoys infinite bliss This is *mokṣa*, liberation of

the *jīva*. This liberation is possible only through the grace of Brahman.

Jīva takes refuge in a *guru* (preceptor) for being liberated from bondage. By the practice of religiosity (including worship and meditation) following the *guru's* instructions, the devotee's soul becomes pure and he attains intuition of Brahman, due to His grace. Then he knows his non-difference from Brahman. He sees everything as a form of Brahman, attains a sense of equality regarding all beings and attains supreme devotion to Brahman. This supreme devotion is referred to as '*dhruvāsmṛti*'.[63] By the attainment of *dhruvāsmṛti* the devotee frees himself from all sorts of desire and attachment. ("*Smṛtilambhe sarvagranthīnāṃ vipramokṣa*". Chānd. Up. 7.26.2.)

As long as he lives in the gross body, after attaining knowledge of Brahman, he performs the necessary *prāravdha-karmas*[64] without any attachment. All his *karmas* other than the *prāravdha* ones are completely destroyed by the knowledge of Brahman. Such a *jīva* is referred to as '*jīvanmukta*' (liberated in an embodied state). However, the Nimbārkist opines that that *jīvanmukti* (embodied liberation) is not to be interpreted here as liberation in the primary sense. The term, 'liberation', is primarily used to refer to '*videhamukti*' (disembodied liberation). In support of his view the Nimbārkist refers to the *Chāndogya* statement, "*Tasya tāvadeva ciraṃ yāvanna vimokṣye atha sampatsye*". ("The knower of Brahman has to wait till he has the body. As soon as he departs from the body he is liberated". Chānd. Up. 6.14.2.) Even the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* states that, the full liberation of the *jīva* is possible only when the knower of Brahman enters *brahmaloka* after dissociating himself from his body. Full liberation is not possible as long as he is associated with the body: "*Vedānta-vijñāna-suniścitārthāḥ sannyāsayogād yatayaḥ śuddhasattvāḥ.*

Te brahmalokeṣu parāntakāle parāmṛtāḥ parimucyanti sarve". ("Those yogins, who are pure through their firm knowledge of Vedānta and through ascetic practices, after the fall of their bodies, become immortal by entering the *brahmaloka*, after being free from all bondage. Mund. Up. 3.2.) Hence the meaning of *jīvanmukta* (embodied liberated), in the Nimbārkist view, is that the *jīva*, equipped with the knowledge of Brahman, is 'fit to be liberated' even when he is embodied. He has the potency to be liberated.

Because of the influence of his *prāravadha-karma* the embodied knower of Brahman is still attached to the body. As long as he is in the body his sense of likes and dislikes does not disappear completely. It disappears completely only when he is dissociated from the body.[65] It may be asked, how is it then said in the Upaniṣad that, 'When all desires leave the heart, then the mortal becomes immortal (liberated)?[66] If such a man is considered to be liberated, then how can this state be called liberation in a secondary sense?

The Nimbārkist replies: it is called the state of liberation in the sense that it is a state in which the past sins and merits of the *jīva* are destroyed, and he remains unattached to actions, meritorious or demeritorious. This state has been referred to in the Upaniṣad as '*amṛta*' (immortal).

The liberated *jīva* attains similarity (*sādṛśya*) with Brahman, through his quality and power. This is known as '*bhagavadbhāvāpatti*', '*brahmasāyujya*'. This '*bhagavadbhāvāpatti*' is liberation according to the Nimbārkist.[67] He quotes in support of his opinion the statement of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*: "*Niranjanaḥ paramaṃ sāmyamu-paitīti*". (The blemishless one attains complete similarity with Brahman, Mund. Up. 3.1.3.) The liberated *jīva's* similarity with Brahman does not include his possession of Brahman's power of creation, maintenance and dissolution. Except these powers of

creation etc. the *jīva* attains all other qualities of Brahman. The liberated *jīva* attains qualities similar to Brahman as His *sarajñatva*, *satyasaṃkalpatva*,[68] *kāmacāritva*.[69] Swami Santadas, however, tells us that there is a little difference between *sarvajñatva* of the liberated *jīva* and that of Brahman. Brahman is naturally and eternally *sarvajña*, the liberated *jīva*, however, is *sarvajña* in the sense that through meditation he can know any particular object. He is not eternally *sarvajña*.[70]

The liberated *jīva* is without old age, death, suffering, hunger and thirst. Having attained *ānandamaya* Brahman, he becoṃes full of *ānanda*.[71] He does not come back to *saṃsāra*.[72] The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says: "The *jīva* treading the divine path does not enter the human cycle of existence. ("*Etena pratipadyamānā imaṃ mānavamāvarttaṃnāvartante*". Chānd. Up. 4.15.6.)

Even in the liberated state the *jīva* remains a part of Brahman. As a part he is non-different from Brahman, and also different. Because of this difference, the *jīva* does not posses Brahman's power of creation, maintenance and dissolution.[73]

That the liberated *jīva* is different from Brahman is evident in the following *Śvetāśatara* texts:

(i) "*Juṣṭaṃ yadā paśyatyanyamīśamasya mahimānamiti vītaśokaḥ*". [When he knows the greatness of the other, the worshipped īsvara (Lord), he becomes free from grief. Śvet. Up. 4.7.]

(ii) "*Pṛthagātmānaṃ preritārañca matvā juṣṭastatastenāmṛtatvameti*". (Knowing the other different self which controls him, the worshipper attains immortality. Śvet. Up.)

In these *Śvetaśatara* texts, the words '*anyam*' (the other) and *pṛthak*' (different) indicate that even in liberation there is difference between *jīvas* and Brahman.

Even in the liberated state the *jīva* feels the natural

bhedābheda relation between himself and Brahman. He feels that as transformation of Brahman's power he is a part of Brahman. Being a part he does not feel himself as completely different from (and independent of) Brahman, and neither as identical with Brahman. If he so wills, the liberated *jīva* can attain a subtle body in *brahmaloka* and other transcending *lokas* in order to enjoy various things. He can enjoy by creating his own body by his resolution. Alternatively, he can enjoy by the body created by Brahman. Yet, the liberated *jīva* is always, in all circumstances, directed by Brahman's will. If he does not will to be associated with a body, he enjoys seeing Brahman, who has infinite qualities and *vibhūtis* (splendour / glory), and feels his non-difference from such a Brahman.

It may be objected that the Nimbārka view of the difference between *jīva* and Brahman contradicts the *Muṇḍaka* text, which says that the liberated self attains Brahman by divesting himself of name and form, just as the rivers entering the sea lose their separate forms. ("*Yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudre'staṃ gacchanti nāmarūpe vihāya. Tathā vidvān nāmarūpād vimuktaḥ parātparaṃ puruṣamupaiti divyam*". Mund. Up. 3.2.8.) The Nimbārkist contends that there is really a difference between the water of the rivers and that of the sea into which they flow. Water is a *sāvayaya-dravya* —it has parts. Mixing of *sāvyava-dravyas* does not result in essential identity (*svarūpaikya*). Such a mixture can only be a lasting union / addition (*nityayoga*). Heavy rainfall adds to the volume of water of the river. This is really to be referred to as an addition and not an essential identity. Although a lump of sugar dissolves in a glass of water yet, since both water and the lump are *sāvayava-dravyas*, the lump does not become essentially identical with the water. If necessary, the sugar can be separately restored by letting the water evaporate. The liberated *jīva* attains Brahman by his knowledge. And the attainment brings about

an eternal connection between the liberated *jīva* and Brahman. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* states that the liberated one attains Brahman ("*paraṃ puruṣamupaiti*"), and this statement indicates that there is a difference between Brahman, who is the object of attainment and the *jīva*, the subject, who attains Him. Thus the liberated *jīva* is eternally connected with Brahman; he does not become essentially identical with Brahman.[74]

It may be objected that if the liberated *jīva* is supposed to be different from Brahman, then that supposition will be contradictory to the *Muṇḍaka* text that the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. ("*Brahmaveda brahmaiva bhavati*", Mund. Up. 3.2.9.) Answering this objection the Nimbārkist argues that the *Muṇḍaka* text does not point to the complete and essential identity of the liberated *jīva* with Brahman. Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa suggests that the word, '*eva*' in the text, "*Brahmaveda brahmaiva bhavati*" is to be interpreted as signifying 'similarity'. Hence, the whole text should be interpreted to mean that, 'one who knows Brahman becomes similar to Brahman'. The liberated *jīva* attains similarity with Brahman in respect of qualities like *apahatapāpmatva*. (being free from sins), *satyasaṃkalpatva*,[75] and in respect of actions of enjoyment.[76]

Swami Dhananjaydas reinforces the Nimbārka view of the difference between the liberated jīva and Brahman by referring to a statement in the *Gītā*:

> "*Idaṃ jñānamupāśritya mama sādharmyamāgatāḥ /*
> *Sarge'pi nopajāyante pralaye na vyathanti ca*" //
> *Gītā*, 14.2.

This statement means that knowing Brahman the enlightened *jīva* becomes liberated. Having this knowledge the liberated *jīva* attains *sādharmya* (similarity) with Brahman. Such a liberated *jīva* is not born again at the time of creation, nor does he suffer at the time of dissolution. This statement

clearly indicates the difference of the liberated soul from Brahman. The *jīva* can have characteristics (*dharmas*) similar to Brahman only if he is different from Brahman. If the *jīva* were completely identical with Brahman, the possibility of his being born and suffering would be inconceivable.[77]

Even the *Taittirīya* text, "*Brahmavidāpnoti param*", which is similar to the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣadic statement quoted in p. 146, indicates that the liberated *jīva* who knows Brahman is the subject who attains (*āpnoti*) supreme Brahman, the object, and is, accordingly, different from Brahman.

The Nimbārkist supports the view expressed in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (8.6.5-6) that the *jīva* who knows Brahman, at his death, goes out of the body through the *suṣumnā* artery which, coming out of the heart, reaches the central part of the head, This artery is connected with the rays of the sun. And the *jīva*, going out through this artery, travels upwards, being borne by the sun's rays, till he reaches the *brahmaloka*. Brahmasūtras 4.2.16-17 also express a similar view of the journey of the liberated *jīva* to reach Brahman.

In the Nimbārkist's opinion the liberated *jīva* is *apahatapāpmā*, free from sins. Since his resolutions necessarily become true, he is described as *satyasaṃkalpa*. He enjoys several things in *brahmaloka*. The Nimbārkist quotes the Upaniṣads in support of his view. Saṃkarācārya, however, is of the opinion that the description of the liberated *jīva's* possession of qualities like *apahatapāpmatva*, *satyasaṃkalpatva* are true only from the empirical (*vyavahārika*) point of view. The description regarding the liberated *jīva's* enjoyment of desired objects (*kāmacāritva*) is also true from the empirical point of view. These Upaniṣadic descriptions are not true from the ultimate (*pāramārthika*) point of view.[78] Swami Santadas disagrees with Śaṃkarācārya's arguments in his *Vedantadarshan*. He points out that the terms,

'*vyavahārika*' and *pāramārthika*', do not figure in Brahmasūtra 4,4,7,[79] where the liberated *jīva* is described as being free from sins, as having true resolutions etc. The distinction between *vyavahārika* and *pāramārthika satya* introduced by Śaṃkarācārya stems from his own imagination. There is no scope of the empirical viewpoint in this context. The reason is, this *sūtra* only discusses the state of the *jīva* in his disembodied emancipation. In this emancipated state the disembodied *jīva*, being united with Brahman, is free from all connection with the empirical world.[80]

Śaṃkarācārya is of the opinion that when the B.S. 4.4.17[81] states that the liberated *jīvas* attain qualities similar to Brahman, except his power of creating, maintaining etc., this statement is regarding those disembodied *jīvas* who attain liberation by worshipping *saguṇa* Brahman. He also says that the Upaniṣadic statements regarding the liberated *jīvas'* enjoying things concern only those who are emancipated through their worship of *saguṇa* Brahman. These statements are not applicable to those who attain liberation by worshipping *nirguṇa* Brahman.

Nimbārkācārya and his followers do not agree with Śaṃkarācārya's view quoted above. They point out that in Brahmasūtra 4.4.17, no distinction is made between the worshippers of *saguṇa* Brahman and the worshippers of *nirguṇa* Brahman. In fact, no *sūtra* of the 4th chapter of *Brahmāsūtra*, where the condition of the liberated *jīvas* is discussed, makes any classification of *jīvas* who have attained Brahman by knowing Him. Only in *sūtra* 4.3.14 ("*Apratīkālambanānnyatīti bādarāyaṇa ubhayathā doṣāttatkratuśca*) a distinction is made between those who worship Brahman as a symbol and those who worship *akṣara* Brahman. It has been said that those who worship Brahman as symbol, viz. as name, as mind, as life (*prāṇa*) and as the sun do not attain Brahman as such. And

those who worship *kāryabrahman* or *Hiraṇyagarbha* attain *Hiraṇyagarbha*[82] (and not Brahman as such). However, the worshipper of *saguṇa* Brahman is described to have attained Brahman Himself at liberation.[83]

Swami Santadas writes that Śaṃkarācārya's view that only the worshipper of *nirguṇa* Brahman is entitled to be emancipated by attaining Brahman, is not in accordance with the Upaniṣads and *Brahmasūtra*. If the author of *Brahmasūtra* was of the opinion that only the worshipper of *nirguṇa* Brahman can attain liberation, then he would have clearly expressed his view in the form of some *sūtra* or other.[84]

Notes & References

1. See p. 4.
2. Namely, earth, fire and water.
3. See p. 39.
4. This theory is held by Advaitins like Vācaspatimiśra.
5. This theory is held by Advaitins like Prakāśātman, see in this connection pp. 56-9.
6. As an axe cuts the wood into parts.
7. *Vedāntaratnamañjuṣā*, Benaras ed. pp. 6-7.
8. "*Jñānasvarūpañca hareradhīnaṃ śarīrasaṃyoga-viyogayogyam /*

   Aṇuṃ hi jīvaṃ pratidehabhinnaṃ jñātṛtvavantaṃ yadanantamāhuḥ" //

   Śloka, 1, *Daśaślokī*, Nimbārkācārya.
9. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra*, 2.3.18. See also *Vedāntaratnamañjuṣā, śloka* 1.

10. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra*, 2.3.18.

11. This *antaḥkaraṇa* is also referred to by the Advaitin as *ahaṃkāra*.

12. "*Tadevaṃ sphaṭike mithyālauhityaṃ kusumanimittamit-yaṅgīkartavyam. Evam-ātmanyahaṃkāra-nimittaṃ kartṛtvādikamāropyate*". Vivaraṇa, 2, p. 91.

"*Kimahaṃkāragatasyaiva kartṛtvasyātmanyāropa utātmani mithyābhūtaṃ kartṛtvāntaramutpadyate. Ādye lohitadṛṣṭāntavaiṣamyaṃ syāt . . . maivam. Na tāvadādyaḥ pakṣo dūṣyati. Ātmani vastuto'sadeva kartṛtvaṃ bhātītyasminnaṃśe dṛṣṭānta uktaḥ*". Vivaraṇa, 2, p. 92.

13. Parapakṣa, pp. 370-2.

14. Parapakṣa, pp. 374-5. See also Ved. pāri. saurabha, 2.3.34.

15. Parapakṣa, pp. 383-4.

16. Great men say that the self, being conjoined with the sense organs and mind is the enjoyer (of results of actions)." Kaṭha. Up. 3.4.

17. Parapakṣa, p. 356.

18. Parapakṣa, pp. 384-5.

19. "*Īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ hṛddeśe'rjuna tiṣṭhati /*

Bhrāmayan sarvabhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā" // *Gīta*, 18.61.

20.(i) "*Phalamata upapatteḥ*". [Results of actions are thus established. B.S. 3.2.38.)

(ii) "*Śrutatvācca*". (The Upaniṣads also establish that Brahman is the dispenser of results of actions B.S. 3.2.39)

(iii) "*Vaiṣamyanaighṛṇye na sāpekṣatvāt tathāhi darśayati*".

[Brahman's partiality and cruelty is not established (as *jīva's* happiness and suffering depends on his past merits and demerits). The Upaniṣads also establish this. B.S. 2.1.33]

21. It cannot be said that God provides *jīvas* with happiness and suffering in accordance with their past actions. Actions are admitted to be beginningless.

22. "*Sa tatra paryyeti, jakṣan, krīḍan, ramamānaḥ*". Chānd. Up. 8.12.3.

23. "*Saṃkalpādevāsya pitaraḥ samuttiṣṭhanti*". Chānd. Up. 8.2.1.

24. "*Vihāropadeśāt*," B.S. 2.3.33

25. "*Saṃkalpādeva tacchruteḥ*". (That the liberated self's resolutions come true, is stated in the Śruti. B.S. 4.4.8)

26. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtrā* 1. 2.1.

Vedāntaratnamañjuṣā (Kashi edition), p. 19.

27. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra* 1. 1.1.

Vedāntakāmadhenu, śloka 1.

28. "*Utkarāntigatyāgatīnām.*" This *sūtra* specifically describes the movement of the *jīva*, out of the body, into higher *lokas*, and his descent again in this world. The higher *lokas* are many, like *vaikunṭhaloka, siddhaloka, mahāvaikunṭhaloka* (see *Śrīmadbhāgavata*, 3.5.16-19). The Nimbārkist contends that the atomicity of *jīvas* is proved from the fact that *jīvas* travel from one *loka* (sphere of existence) to another. If the *jīva* were all-pervasive (*vibhu*). , he would not have been able to move in this way.

29. See in this connection, *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra* 1.1.1, and *Vedāntaratnamañjuṣā*, p. 68. Kashi edition.

30. "*Hṛdi hyeṣa ātmā*". (This *ātman* is in the heart. Chānd. Up. 8.3.)

31. "*Avirodhaścandanavat*". [There is no discrepancy, as a drop of sandalwood paste (gladdens the whole body).]

32. Śaṃkarācārya expresses this view in his commentary on B.S. 2.3.28, "*Tadguṇa-sāratvāttu tadvyapadeśaḥ prājñavat*".

33. *Vedāntakaustubha, sūtra*, 2.3.19.

34. "*Eṣa ātmā niṣkrāmati cakṣuṣo vā mūrdhṇā vā anyebhyo vā śarīradeśebhyaḥ*". [This self goes out through the eyes or *mūrdhaṇ* (central part of the head) or other parts of the body. Bṛhad. Up. 4.4.4. See also Ved. pāri. saurabha, 2.3.19.] "*Tasmānllokāt punaretya asmin lokāya karmaṇe*". (This self comes back to this *loka*, returning from other *loka*. Bṛhad. Up. 4.4.6. See also Ved. pāri. saurabha, 2.3.19.)

35. "*Jñāñājñau dvāvajāvīśānīśau*". (See p. 1.)

"*Adhikaṃ tu bhedanirdeśāt*" (B.S. 2.1.21.) See p. 8 and note 15 of it.

36. See p. 108.

37. The Nimbārka view that *jīva* is the manifestation of Brahman's power of *cit* has been discussed in pages 4, 5, 6, 40, 08.

38. "*Jñājñau dvāvajāviśānīśau*".

39. "*Tatra bheda-vākyānāṃ paratantra-sattā-viṣayakatvena svārthā-bhidhāyītvaṃ, taṣya vahutvāt. Svatantra-svārthā-bhidhāyītvaṃ, tasya vahutvāt. Svatantra-svārthā-bhidhāyītvaṃ, tasya ekatvāt sattāviṣayikā cābhedavākya-pravṛttiḥ, tasyaikatvāt*

tayaiva teṣāṃ nairākāṅkṣyam". Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra, 2.3.42.

40. "*Aṃśo nānā-vyāpadeśād-anyathā cāpi dāśakitavāditvam-adhīyata eke.*"

41. Parapakṣa, p. 589.

42. Parapakṣa, p. 587.

43. "*Jagadvyāpāravarjaṃ prakaraṇādasannihitatvācca*".

44. See p. 119.

45. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra*, 3.2.27.

46. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, sūtra*, 3.2.28.

47. All this is of the essence of the cause (Brahman). Chānd. Up. 6.8.7.

48. *Mahāvākyas* are the great sayings which form the central teaching of both Advaita Vedānta and Nimbārka philosophy. The *mahāvākya*, '*Tattvamasi*' is found in several contexts of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*.

49. See pp. 52-3. *Lakṣaṇārtha* stands for the indirect connotation of words.

50. The sentence really means, 'the milkman lives in the bank of the Ganges'.

51. See *Gaudiya Baishnab Darshan*, Radhagobindanath, part I, p. 92.

52. See p. 52.

53. *Dharmimātrasyā-vāntareṇa padena pratyakṣeṇa ca siddhatvād-upadeśavaiyarthyāt*. Parapakṣa, p. 545.

54. Parapakṣa, p. 546. See also *Tattvapradīpikā*, Citsukhācārya, p. 101, ed. Kashinatha Śastrī, Bombay, 1915.

55. "*Aikyādivākyaṃ yadi saṃsṛṣṭārthakaṃ na syāt tarhi vākyameva na syāt, ākāṃkṣāyogyatā-sannidhimattvābhāvat.*" Parapakṣa, p. 565.

56. Parapakṣa, pp. 574-5.
57. "*Atha kasmāducyate braḥmeti bṛhanto' smin guṇaḥ.*"
58. Parapakṣa , p. 563.
59. Parapakṣa , pp. 574-5.
60. "*Tattvamasyādibhiś-cidātmano brahma-tādātmyo-padeśāt teṣāṃ brahmātmakatvena tadāyatta-sthiti-pravṛttikatvena tadvyāpyatvena tadādheyatvena ca svārthaparatvaṃ samañjasam*". *Parapakṣa*, pp. 618-19.
61. *Vedantdarshan*, p. 103.
62. "*Na jāyate mriyate vā vipaścinnāyaṃ kutaścinna vabhūva kaścit /*

Ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṃ purāṇo na hanyamāne śarīre" //

Kaṭha. Up. 1.2.18.

An almost identical view is expressed in *śloka* 20, chapter 3 of the *Gītā*.

63. Literally, it means undisturbed mindfulness. This refers to constant thinking of the Lord.
64. *Prāravdha-karma* refers to past actions which have started to produce their results in this life. As a result of past *prāravdha karmas jīva* is forced to perform certain actions, even after attaining knowledge of Brahman.
65. "*Na vai saśarīrasya sataḥ priyāpriyayorapah-atirastyaśarīraṃ vāva santaṃ na priyāpriye spṛśataḥ*". Chānd. Up. 8,12,1.
66. "*Yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye 'sya hṛdi sthitāḥ. Atha martyo 'mṛto bhavati*". Kaṭha. Up. 2.3.
67. "*Tadbhāvāpattilakṣaṇamokṣopadeśāt*". *Nimbārka-bhāsya* on B.S. 1.1.7.
68. Having his resolves necessarily becoming true.
69. Having the quality of enjoying desired objects.
70. *Vedantadarshan.*, p. 301.
71. "*Rasa vai saḥ rasaṃ hyevāyaṃ labdhvā ānandī bhavati*". Tait. Up. 2.7.

72. "*Anāvṛttiḥ śabdāt*". B.S. 4.4.22.

73. "*Jagadvyāpāravarjaṃ prakaraṇādasanṇihitatvāccα*". See pp. 129, 143.

74. Liberation is said to be of five kinds: (i) residence in the spiritual abode of Brahman (*sālokya*); (ii) proximity with Brahman (*sāmīpya*); (iii) similarity of form to Brahman (*sārupya* = identity with Brahman); (iv) equality of sovereignty with Brahman (*sārṣṭi*); (v) union with Brahman (*sājujya*). The Nimbārkist advocates the fifth kind of liberation.

75. Having true resolutions.

76. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā*, *sūtra*, 4.4.7.

77. *Srinimbarkacharya, Tanhar Darshanik Matabāda O Sadhanapranali*, Part III, p. 134.

78. See Śaṃkarācārya's commentary on B.S. 4.4.7.

79. "*Evamapyupanyāsāt pūrvabhāvādavirodhaṃ bādarāyaṇaḥ.*"

80. See *Vedantadarshan*, Swami Santadas, p. 263.

81. "*Jagadvyāpāravarjaṃ prakaraṇādasannihitatvācca*".

82. *Hiraṇyagarbha Brahmā* is the first person created.

83. See *Nimbārkabhāṣya* on B.S. 4.3.14.

84. Vedāntadarshan, Swami Santadas, pp. 267-8.

Chapter - IV

THE NATURE OF *JAGAT* ACCORDING TO NIMBĀRKA PHILOSOPHY

As already stated earlier (pp. 3 - 4, 36 - 38) Brahman is, according to the Nimbārkist, the identical material and efficient cause of the world. The world is a transformation of His power of *ānanda* and the *jīvas* are transformation of his power of *cit*.

Vedavyāsa in *sūtra* 1.4.26[1] of *Brahmasūtra* describes the process of the creation of the world. Nimbārkācārya in his commentary on the *sūtra* says that the omniscient and omnipotent Brahman, by the revelation of His own power, transforms Himself into the form of the world. Yet He remains untransformed in his essence.[2] The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*[3] also says that the spider weaves its web out of itself, and it remains over and above the web, and withdraws the web within itself. In the same way, Brahman transforms Himself [4] into the *jīvas* and the world, and yet remains unchanged and untransformed in His essence, and later on withdraws the *jīvas* and *jagat* into Himself.

The world is, according to Nimbārka philosophy, created by Brahman with the help of His power known as *prakṛti*, which is also known as *māyā*. With the help of *prakṛti* (consisting of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) Brahman manifests Himself gradually into *mahat*, *ahaṃkāra*, *manas*, five *jñānendriyas*, five *karmendriyas*, five *tanmātras* and five *mahābhūtas*.[5] Brahman transforms Himself into *jīva* and *jagat*. It is thus evident, the Nimbārkist points out, that though Brahman transforms Himself into *jīva* and *jagat*, yet His essence is not exhausted into the forms of these.

The *jīvas* and the world are thus firmly established in Brahman as His parts (in the form of His power and quality).

Jīvas are eternal,[6] the world, on the other hand, is destructible.[7] *Jīva*, the enjoyer, enjoys the world. Brahman controls both *jīva* and *jagat*.

Since Brahman is the material cause of the world, the latter is non-different from Brahman. Because the world is non-different from and part of Brahman, it cannot thus be said to be a false appearance. The Nimbārkist is thus strongly opposed to the Advaita view that the world is a false appearance due to ignorance.

The Nimbārkist maintains that the world is real. It is not the case that this world was non-existent earlier, and suddenly produced out of nothing. It is seen that when a real thing originates in this world, it originates from a real material cause, and not from nothing. The Nimbārkist is thus a *satkāryavādī*. An effect, according to the *satkāryavādī*, remains in an unmanifest form it its material cause.[8] The origination of a thing is nothing but its express manifestation from its previous latent form.

Thus it is unreasonable to hold that the world has originated out of nothing. Even the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* calls this world real, existent (*sat*) and maintains that the real, existent world cannot originate from absolute non-existence. The question is asked in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*: how can the real, existent world be produced from a pure naught? ("*Kathamasataḥ sajjāyetīti*?" Chānd. Up. 6.2.1.) In answer it is said: surely, the world was previously existent in a latent form in the non-dual Brahman. ("*Sattveva saumyedamagra āsīdekamevādvitīyam*". Chānd. Up. 6.2.2.) Here, both in the question and in its answer, the world has been spoken of as 'existent' (*sat*). The *Chāndogya* statements, 'All this world is Brahman' ('*Sarvaṃ khalvidaṃ brahman*', Chānd.Up. 3.14.1); 'Brahman indeed is all this world' ('*Sa evedaṃ sarvam*',

Chānd.Up. 7.25.1) also signify that the world is real, inasmuch as it is *brahmātmaka* (of the essence of Brahman).

Śaṃkarācārya also states clearly in his commentary on B.S. 2.1.16 ("*Sattvāccavarasya*"): "Just as the cause Brahman is not lacking in existence in the three times, similarly, His effect, the world, is not lacking in existence in the three times. Existence is one and the same in both cases. For this reason also the effect is non-different from the cause". ("*Yathā ca kāraṇaṃ brahma triṣu kāleṣu sattvaṃ na vyabhicarati, evaṃ kāryamapi jagat triṣu kāleṣu sattvaṃ na vyabhicarati. Ekañca punaḥ sattvaṃ ato 'pyananyatvaṃ kāraṇāt kāryasya*". Śaṃkarācārya's commentary on B.S. 2.1.16). However, although Śaṃkarācārya here calls the world 'real', his consistent view is that the world is an appearance.

Reality Of The World Further Established From The *Chāndogya* Description Of Creation.

How the latent powers of Brahman became manifest in the form of the world consisting of names and forms is clearly stated in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.3, it is said that Brahman observed, resolved, that He will be many, He will create Himself in many ways. With this resolution Brahman created fire, water and earth.[9] (Chānd. Up. 6.2.3-4.) It is further stated that Brahman, after creating these three, resolved that He will enter into these three as *ātman*, and He will then manifest Himself in names and forms. ("*Seyaṃ devataikṣata hantāhamimāstisro devatā anena jīvenātmanānu-praviśya nāmarūpe vyākaravāṇī*. Chānd. Up. 6. 3.2.)

As the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* puts it: having united[10] the three elements of fire, water and earth in the process of creating the world, Brahman entered into the threefold elements

as *ātman*, and manifested names and forms. (In other words, Brahman in this way created the world manifested in names and forms.) (*"Tāsāṃ trivṛtaṃ trivṛtamekaikāṃkaravanīti", "Seyaṃ devataikṣata hantāhamimāstisro devatā anena jīvenātmanānupraviśya nāmarūpe vyākaravāṇīti"*. Chānd. Up.6.3.2.)[11] From all this it is known that Brahman creates the world by resolving to create it. Hence this world cannot be unreal, inasmuch as nobody creates an unreal entity by resolving to create it. Moreover, an unreality cannot be referred to by names like 'fire', 'water', 'earth'. Neither can the false appearance be unified for any purpose. Neither can it be meaningfully said that Brahman wilfully enters into anything unreal.

As already noted earlier[12], texts like, "*yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante, yena jātāni jīvanti*", establish the fact that Brahman is the creator and sustainer of the world. Yet it makes no sense to say that an unreal entity is created and maintained. Moreover, the Upaniṣadic texts describing Brahman's creation and sustenance of the world become untrue if the world is unreal. And yet, no Upaniṣadic statement can be treated as untrue. In addition, the author of *Brahmasūtra* establishes, with the help of a number of statements, that Brahman is the identical material and efficient cause of the world. In the second chapter of *Brahmasūtra*, the author takes a lot of pain in rejecting the Sāṃkhya nad Vaiśeṣika theories of the origin of the world, and finally establishes the thesis that Brahman is the cause of the world. If he regarded the world to be a false appearance, he would not have laboured so much in establishing the theory of Brahman's creatorship of the world by rejecting the opponent's theories. It transpires from all this that the world is not unreal.

Swami Santadasa's Rejection Of The Advaita View Of The Unreality Of The World

The Advaitin maintains that the world appears to a man as real only as long as he does not have direct intuition of Brahman (*brahma-sākṣātkāra*). But as soon as he has direct intuition of Brahman, the world appears to him to be a false construction.

Swami Santadas, with the help of a quotation from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Ụpaniṣad* shows that, according to that Upaniṣad, the *brahmajñapuruṣa* (the knower of Brahman) knows all the worldly things as forms of Brahman. The multiple world does not appear to the *brahmajña* as a false appearance. On the contrary, the multiple things appear to him as different forms of Brahman. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text concerned says: "Brahman becomes all these (the perceived world). Those deities, sages and men who know themselves as Brahman become all these. Since the venerable Vāmadeva had such a knowledge of Brahman, he said, 'I was Manu, I was the sun'. (Bṛhad. Up. 1.4.) Even now, he who knows himself to be Brahman (i.e. as non-different from Him), knows all the things to be non-different from Him".[13]

Thus, the *brahmajña's* perception of the diverse things of the world as forms of Brahman is a valid cognition. It does not amount to an illusory cognition. (However, knowing the different worldly things as different from Brahman is an invalid erroneous cognition.)

The Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* and Smṛtis do not describe the world as a false appearance. They describe the manifold world as non-different from Brahman. Hence, when the *brahmajña* knows Brahman he knows the wordly things as non-

different from Brahman. If the *brahmajña* had no knowledge of wordly things, then the *brahmajña* sage Vāmadeva could not have referred to the sun and Manu as Brahman. Vāmadeva's assertion that the sun and Manu are forms of Brahman would have been meaningless if he knew these as non-existent.[14] It can thus be concluded that even the *brahmajña* has knowledge of the multiple world.

Reality Of The World Established From Texts Of Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* Etc.

Because the world is the effect produced by real Brahman, it must itself be real. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says that by the knowledge of one Brahman the knowledge of the multiple world, which (as Brahman's effect) is non-different from Brahman, is possible, just as, from the knowledge of the lump of clay the knowledge of all the effects of that material cause like pots and plates is possible.[15] If the world were a false appearance, then the examples of clay and its products would have been completely useless. The examples have been introduced in order to bring home the truth of 'the knowledge of many through the knowledge of one'. If the *Chāndogya* statement intended to imply that Brahman is the only reality, and could be known only as Brahman, and not as the perceivable world, which is unreal, then the examples of clay and its products would have been inappropriate. If the pots and plates were unreal, then the claim that 'from the knowledge of the lump of clay knowledge of pots and plates etc. is possible' would be contradictory. It is absurd to claim that false appearances are known through the knowledge of the real.[16]

The author of *Brahmasūtra* introduces the *sūtra*, "*Tadananyatvam-ārambhana-śabdādibhyaḥ*", (B.S. 2.1.14)[17] by admitting the reality of the world, which is a transformation of Brahman. This *sūtra* intends to show that the transformation

of a real cause is real and non-different from the cause. Even the four *sūtras* following B.S. 2.1.14 express the same idea of the reality of the world and its non-difference from Brahman.

The Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* and Smṛtis state that the world is sustained[18] and controlled[19] by Brahman. If the world were unreal, Brahman could not have been said to have sustained and controlled it. If the world were a superimposed entity, then Brahman would not have been inclined to sustain it. Only a mistaken man who does not know the locus (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of the illusion of silver will be inclined to attain the silver. A man who has the knowledge of the locus as nacre will not try to acquire the silver. The omniscient Brahman always knows the locus of everything. Hence, if the world were an illusion, Brahman who knows that the illusory world is superimposed on its locus, would not have been prompted to sustain and control it. The Upaniṣadic and *Brahmasūtra* statements cannot be false. Hence, it follows from the true statements that the world is real.

Nimbārka Refutation Of *Anirvacanīyatva*

The Advaitin says that the world is not *sat* (existent) ultimately (*paramārthataḥ*). The worldly things are destroyed and the world itself is dissolved at *pralyaya*. The *pāramārthikasat* (the ultimate real) exists at all times. Yet, as the world is experienced to be there, it cannot be an absolutely unreal chimera (*alīka*). Because *sat* and *asat* are contradictory, the world cannot be said to be *sadasat*. Hence, the world, according to the Advaitin, is distinct from (*vilakṣaṇa*) *sat* and *asat* and *anirvacanīya* (indescribable).

According to the Advaitin, the basis of the superimposition of the world is *avidyā* (nescience), which is *sadasadvilakṣaṇa* and *anirvacanīya* (distinct from existence

and non-existence and indescribable). We shall present the Nimbārka criticism of *avidyā* in chapter V. We shall here, now, present the Nimbārka critique of the Advaita theory of '*sadasadvilakṣaṇatva*' and '*anirvacanīyatva*' of the world.

According to the Nimbārkist, '*anirvacanīya* (indescribable) cannot be chacterised in any way. It cannot be characterised as '*sadvilakṣaṇa*' (distinct from the existent). The reason is, the absolutely non-existent chimera like 'a hare's horn' is also *sadvilakṣaṇa* (distinct from the existent). Yet, the illusory world, or any erroneous cognition for that matter, cannot be treated as a chimera like a hare's horn. Neither can the '*anirvacanīya*' be characterised as '*asadvilakṣaṇa*' (distinct from the non-existent). Since *ātman* is *asadvilakṣaṇa*, it would then have to be regarded as *anirvacanīya* (indescribable). Yet *ātman* cannot be treated as an illusory indescribable cognition. '*Anirvacanīya*' cannot be characterised even as '*sadasa-dvilakṣaṇa*' (distinct from the existent and non-existent). An object can be either existent or non-existent — these two alternatives exhaust the universe of discourse. No object can be judged to be distinct from the alternatives of existent and non-existent. A third form distinct from both existent and non-existent, and designated as '*sadasat*' (existent-cum-non-existent) is not possible.

Now, any negation requires a *pratiyogī*. The *pratiyogī* is that whose negation is implied by the negation. For example, the negation of a cow in a horse has as its *pratiyogī* the cow itself. If *anirvacanīya* is characterised as *sadasadvilakṣaṇa*, then the *pratiyogī* of the negation (*vilakṣaṇa*) must be *ṣadasat* (existent-cum-non-existent). Yet, as shown above, nothing can be designated as *sadasat*. Hence, *anirvacanīya* cannot be characterised as '*sadasadvilakṣaṇa*'.

The Advaitin may suggest that *anirvacanīya* can be

characterised as '*nirvacanāyogya*' (incapable of being described or spoken of). The Nimbārkist would then point out that by saying that 'something (viz. X) is incapable of being described', the very something (viz. X) becomes described. The assertion, 'X is indescribable', is itself a description of X. Thus *anirvacanīya* cannot be said to be characterised as '*nirvacanāyogya*'.[20]

The Advaitin is not entitled to argue, Mādhavamukunda says, that *anirvacanīya* is characterised as, '*sadvilakṣaṇatve sati asadvilakṣaṇatve sati sadasad-vilakṣaṇatvam-anirvacanīyatvam*'. (Being distinct from the existent and also from the non-existent, indescribability is distinction from the existent-cum-non-existent). *Sattva* (existence) and *asattva* (non-existence) exclude each other. The negation of the combination of *sattva* and *asattva* is inconsistent. That which is described as 'distinct from existence' (*sadvilakṣaṇa*) is necessarily non-existence (*asattva*). That non-existence cannot again be described as 'distinct from non-existence (*asadvilakṣaṇa*). Such a description is inconsistent.

The Advaitin may argue that the universe of discourse is not limited to two alternative categories (*koṭi*) of existence and non-existence. There is a third category (*koṭi*) which is called '*anirvacanīya*', which signifies something which cannot be described in terms of either existence or non-existence. The admission of this third category, the Advaitin argues, entitles him to deny that existence and non-existence are mutually exclusive.

The Nimbārkist, however, points out that the above argument suffers from the defect of circular reasoning. The admission of the third category entitles the Advaitin to establish the absence of mutual exclusion between existence and non-existence. The admission of the absence of mutual exclusion

itself again entitles the Advaitin to establish the third category besides existence and non-existence. (How can the Advaitin claim that there is a third category, except by arguing that existence and non-existence are not mutually exclusive?)[21]

The Nimbārkist adds that the silver grasped in an erroneous perception is not something indescribable (*anirvacanīya*) in terms of existent and non-existent. When the correcting knowledge (*bādhakajñāna*) of nacre dawns on him / her, the person concerned realizes that so far what he / she had known was a non-existent (*asat*) silver.[22]

It follows, the Nimbārkist argues, that illusory silver is not an indescribable entity, produced by nescience and destroyed by the correct cognition of the locus. If it were produced by nescience and removed by the correct notion of the locus, the illusory silver cannot be described by the Advaitin as something negated in all three times. If the illusory silver is the product of a cause and destroyed by a cause, it cannot be something negated in the past, present and future.[23]

The illusorily cognised silver cannot be treated as a *prātibhāsika mithyā* (illusory appearance). According to the Advaitin, *prātibhāsika* has no existence in past, present and future. And yet it appears to be there due to some defect. However, in the case of illusion of the form, 'this is silver', the subject, 'this' is related to a present silver. (A silver of the past or future cannot be related to the present cognition of 'this'.) There cannot be an all-time negation of an object in another with which it is related. Since a present silver is related to the subject, 'this', that present silver cannot be negated in past, present and future in the subject, 'this'.

The silver, the *pratiyogī* of the negation, 'this is not silver', cannot even be a practical reality (*vyavahārika-sattā*) having practical efficacy (*arthakriyākāritva*). The reason is,

no one feels that the silver, the object of his / her illusory cognition, that is negated is a practically real silver. When one feels that silver does not exist in this nacre, he /she does not experience the negation of a practical silver. He /she merely experiences the absence of silver of any kind whatsoever. Neither can the silver negated be admitted as an ultimate reality. (*pāramārthika-sattā*). Such an admission will go against the Advaita theory that Brahman alone is the ultimate reality.[24]

Rejection Of The Advaita View Of The Unreality Of The World

Śaṃkarācārya quotes a statement from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* to prove the falsity of the world. The statement is: "*Yathā saumyaikena mṛtpiṇḍena sarvaṃ mṛnmayaṃ vijñātaṃ syādvācārambhaṇaṃ vikāra-nāmadheyaṃ mṛttiketyeva satyam*" (Chand. Up. 6.1.4)[25] Here the sage Uddālaka tells his son Śvetaketu that since Brahman is the material cause of the world, by knowing Brahman the entire world produced out of Him can be known. Uddālaka gives an example to elucidate his point. Just as by knowing a lump of clay all that is made of it can be known, similarly, by knowing Brahman the entire world produced out of Him can be known. The reason is: things made of clay are transformations (*vikāra*) of clay. In this way, the clay forms the essential truth of their existence (*mṛttiketyeva satyam*). They are produced (*ārabdha*) and differentiated from the clay by words (*vāk*), viz. names like 'pot', 'plate'. etc. In this way, they become fit objects of verbal discourse. The transformations of any material cause do not have any independent existence apart from it. Similarly, the world does not have any independent existence apart from Brahman. But since Brahman, the world's material cause, is real, the world is also real. This is the natural interpretation of the *Chāndogya* statement.

But Śaṃkarācārya does not accept this natural

interpretation. In order to prove the falsity of the world, he gives a different interpretation of the *Chāndogya* statement. In his commentary on this statement he says that ultimately the clay alone is real. Things referred to as its transformation have no real existence; they exist depending on their names only. ("*Vāgālambanamātraṃ nāmaiva kevalaṃ, na vikāro nāma vastu asti, paramārthato mṛttikaiva tu satyaṃ vastu asti*". Śaṃkarācārya's commentary on Chānd. Up. 6.1.4.

In this commentary on B.S. 2.1.14,[26] Śaṃkarācārya clearly states that things referred to by the word, 'transformation' do not have any real existence. Transformed things are all unreal. Clay-pots, clay-plates are different from each other, and from the clay, by virtue of their names only. There is no real (substantial) difference between them. They are considered as 'transformation' (and hence as real effects) only because they have separate names. They are nothing but names. Their separate existence, based on names, is unreal. Hence they are unreal, false appearances.[27]

Śaṃkarācārya's view regarding the unreality of the world, however, is not based on sound reasoning. As already shown on p.158, in his commentary on B.S. 2.1.16 [28] Śaṃkarācārya has clearly stated that the world, as an effect of Brahman, has existence in all three times. Hence, the world is ultimately real. When he states, commenting on the *Chāndogya* and *Brahmasūtra* statements that the world is unreal, his statement contradicts his own statement made in his commentary on B.S. 2.1.16.

The non-difference of the effect from the material cause is admitted by all Vedāntins. The non-difference of the effect is clearly stated in B.S. 2.1.14 also. Śaṃkarācārya himself agrees with the spirit of that B.S. statement. However, if the world is viewed as a false appearance by Śaṃkarācārya, then the non-

difference of the effect from the cause can no longer be validly maintained.

Moreover, the non-difference of the effect from the material cause implies that the world, as an effect of real Brahman, must have real existence. Śaṃkarācārya's claim that the world is an illusory appearance, thus, seems to be unjustified.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* speaks of the knowledge of all the effects through the knowledge of one cause. However, if the transformations of the clay, the pots and plates are all considered to be unreal, then it can no longer be claimed that through the knowledge of the clay, the knowledge of pots and plates is possible. If pots and plates are unreal, no knowledge of them is possible.

The world is considered by Śaṃkarācārya to be a *vivarta*, an unreal transformation of Brahman (like the *vivarta* or illusory transformation of nacre as silver). But, if Śaṃkarācārya's consideration is true then it no longer conforms with the view that knowledge of all the effects is possible through the knowledge of their cause. Knowledge of the nacre does not yield knowledge of silver. (On the contrary, valid cognition of nacre sublates the knowledge of silver). Similarly, the Advaitin is forced to admit that the knowledge of Brahman, instead of yielding knowledge of the world of multiplicity, sublates the knowledge of multiplicity.

Thus the word, '*vācārambhaṇa*' of the *Chāndogya* statement cannot, as Śaṃkarācārya intends to, be interpreted to imply false appearance. '*Vācārambhaṇa*' really means, 'produced and differentiated (*ārabdha*) by names and forms, and hence are fit objects of verbal discourse'. (Effects of clay are thus differentiated from each other and from the clay by

virtue of different names and forms, and are thus fit objects of verbal discourse.) If the multiple world is not real, there is no possibility of its knowledge, and consequently, there is no possibility either of the knowledge of all effects from the knowledge of the one cause.[29]

If the world is a false appearance, then the Vedānta literature and its preachings would also be false. That literature can no longer be said to lead men to liberation by real knowledge of Brahman. A false preaching cannot lead men to knowledge of Brahman, and, consequently, to liberation.[30]

Rejection Of The Theory Of *Vivarta*

According to Śaṃkarācārya, the world is a seeming or apparent modification or *vivarta* of Brahman (just as the illusory silver is the seeming modification or *vivarta* of nacre). According to the theory of *vivarta*, the world is superimposed, due to nescience, on Brahman, and is sublated with the dawning of *brahma-sākṣātkāra* (intuitive knowledge of Brahman). Hence, the diverse universe of names and forms is unreal (*mithyā*) from the absolute standpoint. We have just shown above how, the Nimbārkist argues that the unreality of the world cannot be established on the basis of the Upaniṣads and Smṛtis, or on the basis of arguments derived from them. The theory of *vivarta* is, accordingly, rejected by the Nimbārkist with the help of the above arguments.

The Nimbārkist points out that if the world is a *vivarta* of Brahman, then words like '*vivarta*', '*bhrānti*' (error / illusion) would have been mentioned in the Upaniṣads and the Smṛtis, in the context of discussing creation. The word mentioned in these texts is, '*vikāra*', which signifies transformation. Śaṃkarācārya gives the example of the illusion of silver in a nacre in support of his argument establishing the unreality of the world. However, no such example is found in the Upaniṣads

and the Smṛtis when the process of creation is discussed therein. The examples given in this context are those of the production of ornaments and clay potteries from gold and clay. By using the word, '*vikāra*', the Upaniṣads and Smṛtis mean to emphasize that the effect is the real transformation (*pariṇāma*) of the cause.[31]

The Nimbārkist further argues that the superimposed entity must be real and experienced before the superimposition. However, if the world is absolutely unreal (*alīka*), it cannot even he experienced. Consequently, it cannot be superimposed on Brahman.[32] Because the world cannot be superimposed on Brahman, it cannot be a *vivarta* of Brahman.

If the world is supposed to be a *vivarta* of Brahman, then Brahman cannot be the efficient or material cause of the world. Brahman cannot be the efficient cause if the world is unreal. Nobody wilfully creates what is completely unreal. (The magician does not create completely unreal objects. He only creates the illusion of the production of real objects.) Because the effect is non-different from the material cause, the cause and the effect must enjoy the same kind of existential reality. However, if Brahman is the material cause of an unreal world, then like the world Brahman Himself must also be unreal.

We have already shown (see pp. 59 - 61) in detail how the Nimbārkist criticises the Advaita view that an attributeless Brahman is the efficient and material cause of the unreal world. The Nimbārkist also rejects the Advaita view that either *māyā* or Brahman limited by *māyā* is the material cause of the world. Since we have already delineated Nimbārkist's arguments regarding all this, we refrain from repeating them here.

The Nimbārka View That The World Is The Real Transformation of Brahman's Power

The Nimbārkist argues that Brahman manifests His latent powers of *cit* and *ānanda* expressly in the form of *jīva* and *jagat*. The manifestation of Brahman's powers is known as His projection or revelation of His own power (*śaktivikṣepa*). Because Brahman transforms his subtle power into the form of the world, He is therefore said to be the material cause of the world.[33]

Although the world is Brahman's transformation (*pariṇāma*) through the revelation of His power, yet it is not the transformation of His essence. His essence thus remains undistorted (*avikṛta*), even though His power is transformed.[34] Because Brahman's essence remains undistorted, the Nimbārka theory does not suffer from the defect of reducing the partless Brahman completely into the world (as in that case there will be no Brahman apart from the world.)[35]

Brahmasūtra and the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* speak of the world as the real transformation (*pariṇāma*) of Brahman. *Brahmasūtra* states, "*Ātmakṛteḥ pariṇāmāt*" (1.4.26); and the *Taittiriya* states, "*Tadātmānaṃ svayamakuruta*". (Brahmānandavallī, 7.1.) If the theory of transformation is admitted, then the reality of the world would follow from it. Only if the world is considered to be real, could it be meaningfully said that the knowledge of one material cause yields the knowledge of all its manifold effects.

In order to make the theory of transformation convincing, the *Mundaka Upaniṣad* gives the example of the spider. Just as the spider is the cause of its web, yet it, is not itself transformed into it,[36] in the same way Brahman creates the *jīvas* and *jagat* with the help of his essential powers, and, in the end, withdraws the *jīvas* and *jagat* into Himself at dissolution. Throughout the process of creation Brahman remains essentially untransformed and undistorted (*avikṛta*). In Brahmasūtra 2.1.18, "*Paṭavacca*" a similar idea is expressed. Just as the folded piece of cloth is unfolded and spread out, in the same way the world becomes manifest from its unmanifest state. At the time before creation, the world remains in Brahman in a subtle form. At the time of creation Brahman reveals it in a manifest gross form, differentiated by names and forms. Thus the essence of Brahman remains untransformed (*avikṛta*) by the creation. That Brahman remains *essentially* untransformed, by virtue of His unthinkable power, even though the *jīvas* and the world are transformations of His power of '*cit*' and '*ānanda*' is indicated in the *sūtra*, "*Ātmani caivaṃ vicitrāśca hi*". (B.S. 2.1.27)

The question may arise, how can the world he said to be a manifestation of power (*śakti*)? The world consists of gross and hard objects like stones, mountains etc. Yet power is very subtle. It has no parts, and it is known only by its observable effects. So how can the perceivable gross world be referred to as a manifestation of Brahman's power? The world may be said to be regulated by power. It may be seen, heard and tasted as a result of the causal efficacy of power. But how can it itself be said to be a power? The question is answered lucidly by Swami Santadas in the following way:

The difference between the subtle power and the gross material object is not as large as it appears to our common sense. Vapour is very subtle. It is not always visible to the naked

eyes. Think of the way a piece of wet cloth gets dried. The particles of water clinging to it evaporate due the atmospheric heat. They leave the piece of cloth in a very subtle form, in the form of vapour, which is not visible to the eye. The water of the ponds and rivers also evaporate in this way when the sun shines upon them. Even though the vapour is present in the air, it is not seen by the eyes. When cloud is formed out of vapour it becomes a gross observable object. Later on, the cloud assumes a grosser form and falls into the ground in the form of rain. An even grosser form of water is ice. Vapour, water and ice are substantially the same. The first one is a subtle form of matter. The second and third ones are gross manifestation of the same subtle vapour.

Dust, earth and stone are all gross and hard forms of matter. Yet their atoms are very subtle. Many hard objects become liquefied when they are thrown into fire. Some hard objects even turn into gaseous substances when thrown into fire. And they become invisible in those states. In fact, all material objects are transformed from their subtle forms into the gross forms. Thus the difference between subtle and gross objects is not that large as is commonly supposed.

Power and gross visible objects do appear to be absolutely different to a man of common sense. Yet, when judged properly, the difference does not seem to be all that large. Suppose a man sees a particular object one day at a particular place. Then he goes elsewhere, and after some time he forgets the object. After a long time, due to some reasons, he remembers the object seen, and it becomes an object of his knowledge once again. The question arises, where did the visible form of the object now remembered, exist so long? The answer is: the impression of the form of the object seen remained submerged in the rememberer's intellect in a subtle form. At the time of being remembered, the object of the

perception is no longer existent. Yet memory is a cognition, and no cognition is possible without an object. Hence, it must be admitted that the form of the object remembered remained in his intellect in a subtle unmanifest form. Due to some reasons the memory of the object is triggered and the subtle and unmanifest form of the object is transformed into a gross and manifest form. Just as a man's power of vision, when he is not seeing anything, remains in his intellect, in an inactive and subtle form, in the same way, the form of the object remembered, remains, in the rememberer's intellect, in a subtle and unmanifest form. And at the time of remembering the object, the subtle unmanifest form becomes manifest.[37]

Rejection Of The Advaita Definition Of Falsity (*Mithyātva*)

The Advaitin tries to prove the falsity (*mithyātva*) of the world-appearance. But the question is, what does the Advaitin mean by 'falsity'? How is the concept of falsity, which he ascribes to the world-appearance, defined by the Advaitin? The Nimbārkist points out that the Advaitin is unable to give a proper definition of falsity. Accordingly, the Advaitin's attempt to prove the falsity of the world-appearance is doomed to be a failure. The Nimbārkist examines several definitions of falsity advanced by the Advaitin, and shows that all of these definitions are defective.

(1) The author of *Pañcapādikā*, Padmapādācārya defines falsity as: "*Sadasattvānadhikaraṇatvaṃ mithyātvam*". According to this definition, that in which there is neither existence (*sattva*) nor non-existence (*asatta*) is false. In other words, that which is not the locus (*adhikaraṇa*) of either *sattva* or *asattva* is, according to this definition, false. Mādhavamukunda, however, says that this definition of falsity

is too wide. It is applicable even to Brahman. Brahman is, according to the Advaitin, *nirguṇa.* It cannot be qualified either by existence (*sattva*) or by non-existence (*asattva*). Since Brahman is not the locus of either existence or non-existence, He would, accordingly, have to be regarded as a false appearance.[38]

(2) The author of *Vivaraṇaprameya-saṃgraha*, Vidyāraṇya, defines falsity as, "*Pratipannopādhau traikālika-niṣedhapratiyogitvaṃ*". The word, "*pratipanna*' means, 'that which is considered as false' (for example, the nacre-silver is considered as false). The locus (*adhikaraṇa*) of the illusion of silver is nacre in which the silver is negated at all three times. This means, there is absolute non-existence of the silver in the locus, the nacre. The *pratiyogī* (counter- correlative) of such an absolute non-existence is silver, and that silver is false.

Mādhavamukunda shows that this definition is defective. In his opinion, the negation mentioned in the definition cannot be absolutely (*paramārthataḥ)* true, empirically (*vyavahārataḥ*) true, or apparently (*prātibhāsika*) true. Since Brahman alone, in Advaitin's opinion, is the absolute reality, the negation also cannot be absolutely true. The negation cannot even be considered to be a *prātibhāsika* one. *Prātibhāsika* negation occurs only in cases of illusion, and by that negation the falsity of the world cannot be established. In an illusory cognition of the form, 'the pot does not exist', in a place where the pot does exist, the *patiyogitva* of the negation is already established in the pot. If one again tries to prove the falsity of the objects like pots, clothes etc. constituting the multiple world by saying that they are appearances (*pratibhāsa*) and hence false, then his effort will suffer from the defect of proving what is already proved (*siddhasādhana-doṣa*).

The said negation cannot be a negation from the

practical standpoint. According to the Advaitin, the world of multiplicity is practically/ empirically real. If the practical truth of the world is negated, then, since the world is not a *prātibhāsika* object, the *pratiyogī* of the negation of the world of multiplicity, would become an absolute truth like Brahman. Consequently, the Advaitin could no longer claim that Brahman alone is the absolute.[39]

The Advaitin may suggest that the negation concerned is indeed an absolute negation. Yet it is not different from Brahman; it is of the nature of Brahman. Hence, the Advaitin is not compelled to acknowledge two absolute truths. Mādhavamukunda, however, does not accept the suggestion as reasonable. In his opinion, the negation concerned remains uncertain while the person is under the spell of an erroneous cognition. Also the negation depends on a *pratiyogī*. But Brahman remains the certainty even when someone has an erroneous cognition, and Brahman, the absolute, does not depend on anything. Hence Brahman and absolute negation cannot be identical.[40]

(3) The author of *Vivaraṇaprameya-saṃgraha*, Vidyāraṇya introduces another definition of falsity: "*Jñānanivartyatvaṃ mithyātvam*". According to this definition, whatever is sublated or replaced by knowledge is false. Just as the silver is false, since it is sublated or replaced by the knowledge of nacre, in the same way, the world of multiplicity is false, as it is sublated by the knowledge of Brahman. In the opinion of Mādhavamukunda, even this definition suffers from the defect of being too wide. The knowledge arising at the previous moment ceases when a new knowledge arises at the later moment. Yet, although replaced by the later knowledge, the knowledge of the previous moment is not false. But it would perforce be treated as a false one if we accept the definition of falsity quoted above. Moreover, even the impression (*saṃskāra*)

of a previous experience which, when awakened, produces the memory of the object experienced, has to be treated as false, as it is replaced by memory.[41]

The Advaitin may suggest that the word, '*jñāna*' in the definition should really be interpreted as, '*adhiṣṭhānatattva-sākṣātkārarūpaṃ jñānam*'. (This definition is quoted by Madhusūdana Saraswati in *Advaitasiddhi*.) In this way, something is regarded as false, when it is sublated by the knowledge in the form of a direct intuition of the real substratum of knowledge. Since the knowledge of the previous moment is not dispelled by the direct intuition of the substratum, that knowledge is not false.

Mādhavamukunda shows that even this modified definition is not free from defects. In fact, this definition is too narrow. Even when a man attains liberation in an embodied state due to his direct intuition of Brahman, the world of multiplicity does not cease to appear to him. He may be said to suffer from some nescience which remains even when he attains direct intuition of Brahman. This nescience is false, and yet, the definition of falsity does not apply to it. Moreover, one's indirect erroneous cognition (*parokṣa-bhrama*) is dispelled by one's indirect valid cognition (*parokṣa-pramā*). His / her indirect erroneous cognition is undoubtedly false. However, the correcting cognition is not due to any direct intuition of the substratum.[42]

(4) Citsukhācārya defines falsity as: "*Svāśrayaniṣṭhātyantābhāva-pratiyogitvaṃ mithyātvam*". According to this definition, the *pratiyogī* of an absolute negation of a thing in its own locus (*svāśraya*) is false. If an object is shown to be absolutely non-existent in its own locus, then it is a false appearance. This definition of falsity is a rendering by Mādhavamukunda[43] from the following verse by

Citsukhācārya:

"*Sarveṣāmapi bhāvānāṃ svāśrayatvena saṃmate /*
Pratiyogitvamatyantābhāvaṃ prati mṛsātmatā"//

The Advaitin gives the following reasoning for the falsity of a piece of cloth:

A piece of cloth does not exist in its locus, the threads. How? A piece of cloth is a whole (*avayavī*) made of its parts (*avayavas*), the threads. This piece of cloth cannot exist in the threads, inasmuch as a whole cannot exist in its parts.

Yet, the threads are admitted as the locus (*āśraya*) of a piece of cloth, inasmuch as it is produced by the conjunction of threads. Since there is absolute non-existence of a piece of cloth in what is admitted as its locus, the threads, the piece of cloth is to be held as a false appearance. In this way the falsity of the other things, including the world, has been tried to be proved by the Advaitin.

Mādhavamukunda points out that this definition is too wide. It is applicable even to things which are not false. It is applicable, for example, to *saṃyoga* (conjunction). *Saṃyoga*, which does not pervade anything (*avyāpyavṛtti*), is the *pratiyogī* of its absolute negation in its own locus (*svasamānādhikaraṇā-tyantābhāva-pratiyogī*). As the *pratiyogī* of that non-existence, *saṃyoga* is, as per the definition, to be regarded as a false appearance. Yet, a real *saṃyoga* is not false.

Let us now analyse how *saṃyoga* can be the *pratiyogī* of absolute negation in its locus. Although there is *saṃyoga* of birds in a tree's top part, yet there is no such *saṃyoga* in the tree's roots. Hence there remains absolute non-existence of *saṃyoga* in the tree as a whole. Although *saṃyoga* is a non-pervasive relation, yet it is not false. It is a real relation. Hence, Mādhavamukunda shows, what is established by the above

definition is not the falsity of anything. What is established is the existence of something that is non-pervasive. This definition thus proves, not the falsity of the world, but only its *avyāpyavṛtti* (non-pervasive existence). Since *avyāpyavṛtti* is not the same as *mithyātva*, this definition suffers from the defect of stating something different from what is meant to be stated (*arthāntaratā*).[44]

The Advaitin may slightly modify his definition of *mithyātva* and suggest that, "*svasaṃsṛjyamānā-dhikaraṇa-niṣṭhā-tyantā-bhāva-pratiyogitvam*" is *mithyātvam.* According to this definition, something is false when it is the *pratiyogī* of the absolute non-existence in the locus (*adhikaraṇa*) with which it is capable of being related (*svasaṃsṛjyamāna*). In this way, the definition will no longer be applicable to non-pervasive (*avyāpyavṛtti*) entities like *saṃyoga*. The reason is, *saṃyoga* is not absolutely non-existent in the locus with which it is capable of being related (namely the part of the tree where the birds are conjoined with it).

Mādhavamukunda, however, says that even this modified definition is not a helpful one. The locus of a pot can be of two different types. When the pot is conjoined with the ground, its locus is the ground. However, the parts of a pot (its *kapālas*) are the locus of its inherence (*samavāya*). (The pot does not inhere in the ground.) There is also absolute non-existence of the pot in its parts with regard to its relation of conjunction (as the pot is not conjoined with its parts). All this shows that, in a sense, the pot is absent in the locus with which it is capable of being related. It follows that the real pots and pieces of cloth are the *pratiyogī* of the absolute non-existence of the sort mentioned by the Advaitin. Hence the proposed definition of falsity applies to cases which are obviously not false.

The Advaitin may try to say that if an object is absolutely non-existent in the same locus in which it is known to exist, and if it is non-existent in it in the same form and in the same relation in which it is known to exist, then it is a false appearance. Mādhavamukunda says that such an attempt to describe falsity leads to an absurdity. It would be absurd to claim the non-existence of an object in the same locus, in the same form and in the same relation in which it is known to exist in a particular locus (in a particular form, in a particular relation). It transpires, Mādhavamukunda urges, that even the fourth definition of falsity, introduced by Citsukhācārya does not stand the test of a critical scrutiny.[45]

(5) Ānandabodha suggests another definition of falsity. According to this definition, whatever is distinct from the existent is false: "*Sadbhinnatvaṃ mithyātvam*". An existent object is established (*siddha*) by a source of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*). Thus, in Ānandabodha's view, distinctness from that which is established by a source of valid cognition, free from defects, is falsity. Mādhavamukunda opines that even this definition is not acceptable. This is a too wide definition. According to the Advaitin, Brahman Itself is different from all that is established by non-defective sources of valid cognition. The definition proposed by Ānandabodha applies even to Brahman, and thus threatens to turn Brahman into a false appearance.

Mādhavamukunda adds that even pots and pieces of cloth are not different from what is established by defect-free sources of valid cognition. Since they are established by valid means of cognition, they ought to be regarded as real. Yet, although they are regarded by the Advaitin as false appearances, the definition of the false is not applicable to them.

The Advaitin may try to defend his position by arguing

that since, in the Advaita view, everything other than Brahman is superimposed by nescience, even the sources of valid cognition like perception are not free from defects. Even they are the products of nescience. Mādhavamukunda, however, argues that in that case even the Vedas (which are other than Brahman), from which we know that perception etc. are products of nescience, can be said to be a product of nescience; even the Vedas may not be free from the defect of being superimposed by nescience.[46]

Keśvakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa and Puruṣottamaprasāda Vaiṣṇava also criticised and rejected the Advaita Vedānta definitions of falsity in *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā* (*sūtra* 2.1.14) and *Śrutyantakalpavallī* (p. 56. Kashi edition).

Nimbārka View That Falsity Cannot Be Known By Any *Pramāṇa*

The Nimbārkist points out that falsity of the world cannot be known by any means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*). Perception (*pratyakṣa*) cannot be the valid means of knowing falsity. The false is said to be negated at all three times. Because perception can grasp only the present object, it is obvious that it cannot make anyone aware of the falsity of anything at all three times.

Falsity cannot be known even by inference (*anumāna*). Inference depends on the knowledge of the invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*) between the probans (*hetu*) and the probandum (*sādhya*). Such an invariable concomitance is known by perception. Hence, since no perception is possible with regard to the falsity of the world, no inferential knowledge is possible of such a falsity either.

The falsity of the world cannot be known by verbal testimony. We have already discussed (see pp. 158 - 70) how

the Nimbārkist rejects the Advaita view of the unreality of the world and the Advaita *vivartavāda*. In this context the Nimbārkist has shown that the falsity of the world cannot be established on the basis of the Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* and Smṛtis.

The Advaitin may say that the Upaniṣadic statements like, "*Neha nānāsti kiñcana*" (There is no multiplicity here), "*Ekamevādivitīyam*" (He is one, without a second), prove that there is no reality other than Brahman; and hence, the world of multiplicity is a false appearance. The Nimbārkist argues that these statements do not establish the falsity of the world. They only intend to say that the world does not exist independently of Brahman. (In fact, the multiple worldly things owe their existence to Brahman.) When it is said, "The Chola king was one without a second", the existence of other kings, and that of his subjects is not denied. What is denied is the existence of any other king equal to the Chola king in strength and quality. Similarly, the statement, "*Ekamevādvitīyam*", only establishes that there is nothing equal to, or more than Brahman.

The Advaitin tries to prove the falsity of the world appearance by the inference: "*Vyavahārikaṃ jagat-prapañcaṃ mithyā, dṛśyatvāt, jaḍatvāt, paricchinnatvācca, śuktirajatavat*".[47] [The empirical world of multiplicity is a false (appearance), inasmuch as it (i) is perceived, (ii) is an insentient object and (iii) is limited; just like the silver-nacre.]

Nimbārkists like Puruṣottamācārya, Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa, Mādhavamukunda and Puruṣottamaprasāda prove this inference to be defective.

(1) Firstly, several definitions of falsity advanced by the Advaitins have all been shown to be unestablished above. Since the *sādhya* (probandum) of the inference, namely

mithyātva (falsity) itself is unestablished (*asiddha*), the inference is fallacious.

(2) The *pakṣa* (subject) of this inference is the empirical world. The Nimbārkist asks: is this *pakṣa*, the world, known by *pramāṇa* (means of valid cognition)? If it is so known, then it is established by *pramāṇa*, and hence, cannot be proved to be false. If it is not so known, then it becomes an unestablished entity like the 'horn of a hare'. And nothing can be proved regarding such an unestablished subject. An inference that tries to prove something with regard to an unestablished entity, suffers from the *doṣa* (defect) of *āśrayāsiddhi*.

(3) The probans (*hetu*) of this inference consists of: (i) *dṛśyatva* (perceivability), (ii) *jaḍatva* (insentience) and (iii) *paricchinnatva* (limitedness). The Nimbārkist points out that none of the three probans is a valid one.

(i) Anything is called *dṛśya* (perceivable) by the Advaitin when it is an object of knowledge in the form of a mental mode (*antaḥkaraṇa-vṛtti*). But Brahman is also an object of knowledge, produced from the Vedāntic statement, in the form of a mental mode. Thus Brahman also becomes a *dṛśya*, a perceived object. And Brahman must, in that case, become a false appearance. The Advaitin may contend that pure Brahman is not perceivable. What is perceived is a conditioned (*upahita*) Brahman. In other words, conditioned Brahman alone, and not pure Brahman, becomes an object of a mental mode. Yet, the Nimbārkist does not agree with the Advaitin's contention.

The Nimbārkist points out that it must be admitted that in the revelation of the conditioned Brahman, Brahman which is related to the condition is also revealed. Thus the knowledge of the conditioned Brahman carries in its fold also the knowledge of Brahman related to the condition. And this revelation is made with the help of a mental mode having

Brahman as its object. If pure Brahman never appears as an object of a mental mode, then it could never be known that It is pure Brahman. In other words, pure Brahman could never be established if It never appears as an object of a mental mode.

The Advaitin says: "*Śuddhaṃ svaprakāśam*". (Pure Brahman is self-revealing.) The Nimbārkist asks, does pure Brahman appear in this verbal knowledge? If It does appear, then the *dṛśyatva* (perceivability) of Brahman is established. If It does not, then the self-revelation of pure Brahman is not established.

Moreover, if pure Brahman is never the object of knowledge, then liberation can never be established. (According to the Advaitin, conditioned Brahman is unreal, and knowledge of such Brahman never leads to liberation.) And if pure Brahman can be the object of knowledge, then It becomes an observable object (in the form of a mental mode). Moreover, if pure Brahman is never an object known by a source of valid cognition in the form of a mental mode, then It will become absolutely false and unreal (*tuccha*) like the hare's horn.

Moreover, if something is never an object of knowledge, then no characteristic can ever be ascribed to it or denied with regard to it. Hence, by the admission that pure Brahman does not have the property of perceivability, it is proved that pure Brahman is an object of knowledge.

The Advaitin may try to save his position by saying that '*dṛśyatva*' ('perceivability') of anything means its 'being an object of a mental mode that is produced by a non-verbal knowledge (*śabdājanya-vṛtti-viṣayatva*)'. Brahman does not have the property of 'being an object of a mental mode that is produced by a non-verbal knowledge'. On the contrary, Brahman has only the property of 'being an object of a mental mode that is produced by a verbal knowledge' ('*śabdajanya-*

vṛtti-viṣayatva'). In this way the definition of falsity does not apply to Brahman.

The Nimbārkist rejects the Advaitin's argument quoted above. He points out that pure Brahman Himself is the locus of objects like the pot. Consequently, when objects like pots become the objects of mental modes of visual knowledge, then their locus, Brahman, also becomes the object of a mental mode produced by visual knowledge. No knowledge can have the superimposed as its object, without also having the locus of superimposition as its object. Consequently, Brahman, the locus of superimposed objects like pots, becomes an object of a mental mode produced by visual perception when things like pots become objects of visual perception.

That pure Brahman becomes the object of a mental mode that is not produced from verbal knowledge, the Nimbārkist says, is obvious from certain Upaniṣadic statements. That Brahman is the object of mind is obvious from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* statement, *Manasaivānudraṣṭavyam*, (Brahman is perceived by the mind. Kaṭha. Up. 2.6.9.) The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* says, "*Tatastu taṃ paśyati niṣkalaṃ dhyāyamānam*". (Then the meditating yogī perceives the partless Brahman. Mund. Up. 3.1.8.) The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* says, "*Dṛśyate tvagrayā buddhyā*". (Brahman is perceived by the intellect. Kaṭha. Up. 1.3.12.) These three Upaniṣadic statements make it clear that Brahman is the object of the intellect and meditation.[48] The reason, 'perceivability' is thus shown to be a defective one in the inference advanced by the Advaitin.

(ii) The reason, *jaḍatva* (insentience) is also shown by the Nimbārkist to be a defective one. What does *jaḍatva* (insentience) stand for? It cannot be said that whatever is different from knowledge is an insentient object. The self is also different from knowledge. Yet it is not insentient. It may

be argued by the Advaitin that self is not different from knowledge. Self is *jñānasvarūpa*; knowledge is its essence.

The Nimbārkist asks: does the knowledge which forms the essence of self have an object or not? If it does have an object, then the question arises: does that self know itself, or does it know something else? The Advaitin cannot maintain that the self knows itself. The reason is, self in their opinion, never known by a means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*). Neither can the self be said to know something other than itself. The liberated self has knowledge. Yet, when one attains liberation, nothing other than the self remains real for him / her. His / her knowledge in that state cannot have anything other than the self as the object. Neither can it be reasonably maintained that knowledge which forms the essence of the self is an objectless knowledge. Nothing can be said to be knowledge if there is no object known.

The Advaitin may suggest that although there is no real object of any knowledge, yet a knowledge can be related to a superimposed object. The Nimbārkist, however, shows that the Advaitin's argument suffers from the defect of mutual interdependence (*anyonyāśraya-doṣa*). Superimposition implies the falsity of the superimposed. Hence, superimposition can be established only when the falsity of the superimposed is established. The Advaitin is, however, trying to establish the falsity of the world appearance on the basis of a relation between knowledge and a superimposed object. Thus the concept of superimposition depends on the concept of falsity; and the concept of falsity depends upon the concept of superimposition.

Moreover, the knowledge which the Advaitin claims to be the essence of the self, cannot be either a valid cognition (*pramā*) or on erroneous cognition (*bhrama*). Because the Advaitin maintains that the self is not the object of a mental

mode, such a self is not said to be known by any means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*). Thus the knowledge which is the essence of the self is not a valid cognition (*pramā*). Neither can this knowledge be an erroneous cognition (*bhrama*). Error is due to some defect. But the eternal knowledge forming the essence of the self cannot be affected by any defect. The Nimbārkist argues that if the said knowledge is neither a valid one nor an erroneous cognition, it cannot be regarded as knowledge at all. Thus, it is established that it is unreasonable to say that whatever is distinct from knowledge is insentient.

Neither can it be said that *jaḍatva* (insentience) means, *ajñātṛtva* (not being a knower). According to the Advaitin, *antaḥkaraṇa* (mind) is a knower. Hence, the reason, *jaḍatva*, is not present in *antaḥkaraṇa* (as it is a knower). Yet, the Advaitin regards *antaḥkaraṇa* as a false entity. In other words, *antaḥkaraṇa* as a false entity is included in the *pakṣa* (subject), the illusory world appearance. Therefore, the probans, '*ajñātṛtva*' (not being a knower) is present only in a part of the subject (*pakṣa*). Such a probans gives rise to an inferential fallacy known as '*bhāgāsiddha-doṣa*'. (This fallacy arises when the probans, being present only in a part of the subject, can establish the probandum with regard to only a part of the subject.) The reason, 'not being a knower' (*ajñātṛtva*) can establish the falsity of all things of the world appearance except the *antaḥkaraṇa* of the individuals. Moreover, if *jaḍatva* is interpreted as *ajñātṛtva*, then the latter property is applicable to Brahman (inasmuch as pure Brahman of the Advaitin is not a knower). Hence, the probans, *ajñātṛtva*, is present in the subject, yet it cannot establish the probandum, falsity, with regard to the subject. It will be an inconclusive probans (*anaikāntika-hetu*), as it is found both in the presence and absence of the probandum.

(iii) Even *paricchinnatva* (limitedness), the Nimbārkist

shows, cannot be a valid probans. Ether (*ākāśa*) is not limited by space and time. Ether is omnipresent; hence it is not spatially limited. Being eternal, ether is not limited by time. Yet, the Advaitin considers ether to be a false appearance.

Take the case of the illusory silver in the nacre. The silver does not exist in the nacre. It never existed in the nacre; and it will never exist in the nacre. Hence, this silver is a false appearance, and yet, it is not limited.by time.

Even *avidyā* (nescience), according to the Advaitin, is not limited by space and time. Since it is the material cause of space and time, it cannot be said to be limited by space and time. Since it is connected with the omnipresent Brahman, it does not have any spatial boundary. Hence *avidyā* is false, and yet, it is not limited by space and time.

The Nimbārkist says that even the example of the illusory silver cannot be treated as a valid example in the inference. As a false entity the silver is included in the class of entities which are inferred to be false. The illusory silver is thus a part of the entire subject (*pakṣa*). However, as a rule, the example cannot be identical with a part of the subject.[49] The Nimbārkist thus concludes that the inference with the help of which the Advaitin tries to prove the falsity of the multiple world, has been shown to be unacceptable on all accounts.

Nimbārka Refutation Of The Ineffable Nature Of The World And The Degrees Of Reality

The Nimbārkist contends that it obviously follows from the above discussion that the multiple world is not a false appearance; it is a real world. The Advaitin may at this point say that in his opinion the world is neither real nor a false appearance. As a matter of fact it cannot be described either as a false appearance or as a reality. It is thus *anirvacanīya*

(inexpressible). The Nimbārkist does not accept the Advaita view that the world is *anirvacanīya*. Since we have already given a detailed account of the Nimbārka refutation of Advaita theory of the world as *anirvacanīya* in pages 166-4, we need not repeat the account here.

The Advaitin speaks of three sorts of existence, the *prātibhāsika*, the *vyavahārika* and the *pāramārthika*. The *prātibhāsika* stands for the illusory appearance of things. The *prātibhāsika* is only apparently real. The illusory appearance of silver in nacre, of the snake in the rope, are all instances of the *prātibhāsika* existence. The *vyavahārika* stands for the empirical world, wherein our practical needs are fulfilled. The *pāramārthika* stands for the ultimate reality, Brahman.

The distinction of the three sorts of existence is not accepted in Nimbārka philosophy. The *vyavahārika* (empirical) existence is known to have practical efficacy. Water, for example, quenches our thirst. The *prātibhāsika* illusory water (in the case of mirage) lacks such an efficacy to quench thirst. The Nimbārkist, however, points out that the distinction between the *prātibhāsika* and the *vyavahārika* cannot be drawn in terms of practical efficacy. The dreamt water quenches thirst in dreams. The dreamt pitcher is seen to contain dreamt water in dreams. Even a dreamt tiger-attack makes us scream and shiver. Thus though dreams are treated as *pratibhāsika* existences by the Advaitin, yet dreams cannot be said to lack practical efficacy.

The Advaitin contends that *vyavahārika* existents are considered unreal inasmuch as they are sublated by valid cognition of Brahman. On the other hand, the *prātibhāsika* existents are considered unreal inasmuch as they are sublated by valid cognitions (*pramā*) other than the knowledge of Brahman. The *vyavahārika* and the *prātibhāsika* existences are thus shown to be different from one another. The

Nimbārkist, however, argues that the Advaita reasoning is not justified. The Advaitin does not accept any cognition other than that of Brahman to be a valid cognition. How can he then claim that illusory objects are considered unreal, inasmuch as they are sublated by valid cognitions other than the knowledge of Brahman? Moreover, the Advaitin is not entitled to say that the classification of the *prātibhāsika*, *vyavahārika* and *pāramārthika* is a true classification, since, in his opinion, Brahman alone is true (and everything else is false). Neither is the Advaitin entitled to say that the above classification is false, as this will result in his abandoning the classification itself.[50]

Notes & References

1. "*Ātmakṛteḥ pariṇāmāt*". (Since Brahman creates out of Himself and is transformed.)
2. "*Sarvajñaṃ sarvaśakti brahma svaśaktivikṣepeṇa jagadākāraṃ svātmānaṃ pariṇamya avyākṛteṇa svarūpeṇa śaktimatā kṛtimatā pariṇatameva bhavati*". *Nimbārkācārya* on B.S. 1.4.26.
3. "*Yathorṇnābhiḥ sṛjate gṛhnate ca*". Mund. Up. 1.1.7.
4. That is, transforms His powers of *cit* and *ānanda*.
5. For a detailed analysis of *prakṛti* and its 23 evolutes the following books in English are specially recommended:

   (i) *The Sāṅkhya System*, A.B. Keith.
   (ii) *The Sāṅkhya Philosophy*, Nandalal Sinha.
   (iii) *The Sāṅkhya Philosophy*, S.C. Banerjee.

6. Bṛhad. Up. 4.3.30, Śvet., Up. 6.13, Kaṭha. Up. 1.12.18, B.S. 2.3.17 (and *Nimbārkabhāṣya* on it).
7. "*Yat kiñcit jagatyāṃ jagat.*" Īśa. Up. 1.
8. The *satkāryavādī* differs from the *asatkāryavādī*, according to whom the effect does not exist in a latent

form in the cause. It is a new beginning.

9. "*Tadaikṣata vahu syāṃ prajāyeyeti, tattejo'sṛjata, tadapo'sṛjata . . . .*"

10. This unification is known as *trivṛtkaraṇa.*

11. See pp. 27, n.8, 39.

12. See pp. 1,2, 11, 39.

13. See p. 67.

14. *Vedantadarshan*, Swami Santadas, Introduction, pp. 11-12.

15. "*Yathā saumyaikena mṛtpiṇḍena sarvaṃ mṛnmayaṃ vijñātaṃ syādvācārambhaṇaṃ vikāra-nāmadheyaṃ mṛttiketyeva satyam*". Chānd. Up. 6.1.4. [O gentle one, just as from the cognition of a lump of clay all that are made of it are cognised, and such transformations are known to be different from the clay by name only. They are nothing but clay in their essential existence (in the same way, from the cognition of one Brahman the knowledge of the multiple world is possible.)]

16. *Vedāntadarshan*, Swami Santadas, Introduction, pp. 20-21.

17. See pp. 9, n.22, 10.

18. "*Yena jātāni jīvanti*".

19. "*Ya ātmani tiṣṭhanātmānamantaro yamayati*". (*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 14.5.30.) See p. 8.

20. Parapakṣa, pp. 262-3.

21. Parapakṣa, p. 306.

22. Parapakṣa, pp. 309-11.

23. Parapakṣa, p. 306.
24. Parapakṣa, pp. 309-11.
25. See p. 161, n. 15.
26. "*Tadananyatvamārambhanśabdādibhyaḥ*".
27. "*Vāċārambhaṇaṃ vikāro nāmadheyaṃ vācaiva kevalamasti . . . na tu vastuvṛttena vikāro nāma kaścidasti nāmadheyamātraṃ hyetadanṛtaṃ . . . vācārambhaṇa-śabdena ca vikārajātasyānṛtatvābhidhānāt*". Śaṃkarācārya's commentary on B.S. 2.1.14.
28. "*Sattvāccāvarasya*".
29. *Vedāntakaustubhaprąbhā*, 2.1.14.
30. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā*, 2.1.14, *Vedāntaratnamañjuṣā*, pp. 65-9.
31. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā*, 2.1.14.
32. *Vedāntaratnamañjuṣā*, p. 65.
33. "*Tatropādānatvaṃ nāma . . . sukṣmāvasthāpannānaṃ śaktīnāṃ . . . sthūlatayā praķāśakatvaṃ*". Ved. kaus. bhāṣya on *sūtra*, 1.4.26.
34. "*Brahma svaśaktivikṣepeṇa jagadākāraṃ svātmānaṃ pariṇamya avyākṛtena svarūpena śaktimatā kṛtimatā pariṇatameva bhavati*". Ved. pāri. saura. bhāṣya on sūtra, 1.4.26.
35. This defect is pointed out in the Brahmasūtra, "*Kṛtsnaprasaktir-niravayavatva-śabdakopo vā*", B.S. 2.1.25.
36. Mund. Up. 1.1.7. See also p. 5.
37. *Gurushishyasambad*, Sudhir Gopal Mukherjee (ed.) pp. 22-5.

38. Parapakṣa, p. 253.
39. Parapakṣa, p. 253.
40. Parapakṣa, pp. 253-4.
41. Parapakṣa, pp. 259-60.
42. Parapakṣa, pp. 259-60.
43. Parapakṣa, p. 257.
44. Parapakṣa, p. 257.
45. Parapakṣa, p. 259.
46. Parapakṣa, pp. 260-1.
47. As quoted in *Srinimbārka O Dvaitādvaita Darshan*, Amarprasad Bhattacharya, p. 434.
48. *Vedāntaratnamañjuṣā* (Kashi edition, pp. 68-9).
49. *Vedāntaratnamañjuṣā*, pp. 68-70.
Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, *sūtra*, 2.1.14.
50. *Śrutyantasuradruma, śloka* 16, pp. 174-6 (Kashi edition).
See also *Śrutyantakalpavallī*, pp. 85-7, (Kashi edition).

Chapter - V

NIMBĀRKA CRITICISM OF ADVAITA VEDĀNTA CONCEPTS OF *ADHYĀSA* AND *AJÑĀNA*

The Advaitin regards the world, consisting of inert things and *jīvas*, as a false appearance. This false appearance is, the Advaitin contends, due to *adhyāsa*, a mistaken superimposition of an unreal world on Brahman, prompted by *ajñāna* (nescience). In order to establish that the *jagat* and *jīvas* are real, the Nimbārkist finds it necessary to reject the Advaita concepts of *adhyāsa* (superimposition) and *ajñāna* (nescience), which form the corner-stone of the Advaita theory of the unreality of *jīva* and *jagat*. Nimbārkists like Puruṣottamācārya, Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa, Mādhavamukunda, (and also others following them) have exerted all their energy in dexterously criticising the Advaita concepts of *adhyāsa* and *ajñāna*. We shall, in the following section, give a brief account of the Nimbārka criticism of the concept of *adhyāsa*. In the next section following that we shall briefly record the Nimbārka criticism of the concept of *ajñāna*.

Section I

CRITICISM OF THE CONCEPT OF *ADHYĀSA*

Adhyāsa is defined in Advaita literature as: "*Smṛtirūpaḥ paratra pūrvadṛṣṭāvabhāsaḥ*".[1] It is a false appearance of a previously experienced object in another object experienced later. The object which falsely appears is similar in form to that of a remembered object. *Adhyāsa* (superimposition) thus arises depending on the *saṃskāra* (impression) of a past experience. The Advaitin gives the example of the false appearance of a nacre as silver. The remembered form of the previously seen silver is superimposed on the presently seen nacre. The world is *adhyasta* (superimposed) on Brahman

through primal ignorance (*mūlavidyā*). (The cause of the superimposition of silver on nacre is referred to by the Advaitin as an auxiliary nescience, *tūlāvidyā*.) Because the superimposed world and silver are sublated (*vādhita*) by proper knowledge they are not real (*sat*). Yet, because they are directly experienced, they are not fully unreal (*asat*) either. Hence, according to the Advaitin, they are *sadasad-vilakṣaṇa-anirvacayanīya* (not describable as either real or unreal). We have already shown (pp.165-70) how the Nimbārkist rejects the Advaita concept of *anirvacanīya*. We shall present below the Nimbārka critique of the concept of *adhyāsa*.

A

Inappropriateness Of The Characteristic, *Pūrvadṛṣta*

The Nimbārkist argues that *adhyāsa* is due to a totality of causes like *saṃskāra* (impression), *doṣa* (defect), *sādṛśya* (similarity) and *samprayoga* (the general knowledge of the substratum). Yet, in the case of the *adhyāsa* of the world on Brahman, none of the causes can be said to be present.

In the case of the *adhyāsa* of the world, there is no *saṃskāra* (impression) of a *pūrvadṛṣṭa* (previously perceived) object. As a result, the characteristic, *pūrvadṛṣṭa*, is inappropriate in the definition of *adhyāsa*.

In the case of any *adhyāsa* an object similar to the superimposed one must be present at a different place and time. For example, *adhyāsa* of silver is possible only because a piece of silver similar to the *adhyasta* (superimposed) silver is seen to be present in the shop on an earlier occasion. The *saṃskāra* of the earlier experience is the cause of the present *adhyāsa*. This previously seen silver is referred to as a *pradhāna* in the case of the *adhyāsa* of silver on nacre. That object, whose experience produces the *saṃskāra*, the cause of *adhyāsa*, is

called the *pradhāna* of that *adhyāsa*. *Pradhāna* refers to a real object, similar to the superimposed one, existing in a different place and time. Hence, if the world is superimposed on Brahman, it must be admitted that a world similar to the superimposed one is present at a different place and time. But the Advaitin does not admit the existence of such a similar world before the *adhyāsa* of the present world. The admission would not be reasonable either. Hence, a previous experience of a similar world, which can produce the *saṃskāra*, on which the present *adhyāsa* depends, is not possible. The Advaitin must thus admit that the characteristic, *pūrvadṛṣṭa*, used in the definition of *adhyāsa* is inappropriate.[2]

B
Inappropriateness Of The Characteristic, *Smṛtirūpaḥ*

Adhyāsa is said to be an appearance of an object similar to a remembered object (*smṛtirupaḥ = samaryamāna-sadṛśaḥ*). The Nimbārkist shows that the characteristic, *smṛtirūpaḥ*, is inappropriate in the definition of *adhyāsa*. Because nothing could possibly exist before the first *adhyāsa* (due to *mūlāvidyā*) of the world on Brahman, the first *adhyāsa* cannot be an appearance of an object similar to a remembered object (*smṛtitūpaḥ*). The first *adhyāsa's* object cannot be akin to a remembered object, as there is no previous experience of any object before the first *adhyāsa*. Hence the term, '*smṛtirūpaḥ*' = '*smaryamāna-sadṛśaḥ*', becomes a meaningless one like the 'hare's horn' in the context of the first *adhyāsa*.[3] The characteristic, *smṛtirūpaḥ*, is actually inappropriate in the definition.

The Advaitin suggests that the present *aḍhyāsa* of the world is caused by the *saṃskāra* of the previous experience of a world which was also superimposed (and hence falsely imagined) on Brahman. The *adhyāsa* of that previously

superimposed and imagined world is, in its turn, also the result of the *saṃskāra* of a previous experience of a world superimposed on Brahman on an earlier occasion. In fact the Advaitin claims that the *saṃskāras* and their effects, *adhyāsas*, form a beginningless series. (We shall talk about the Nimbārka critique of beginningless series of *saṃskāras* and *adhyāsas* later on.)

There is no such rule, the Advaitin claims, that *adhyāsa* must be caused by a *saṃskāra* of the experience of a real object. Even if the object of experience is an imagined (unreal) one, it can produce a *saṃskāra* which can bring about an *adhyāsa*.[4]

The Advaitin speaks of the *saṃskāra* due to the experience of an imagined (*adhyasta*) world. The Nimbārkist points out that since the imagined things have no real existence, they cannot be experienced either. So, how can those imagined things be said to produce experience?[5] Moreover, he also points out, the Advaita reasoning suffers from the defect of mutual interdependence. The imagined status of the world is established by establishing the validity of *adhyāsa*. (The imagined nature of the world cannot be acknowledged till the validity of *adhyāsa* is established.) However, the validity of *adhyāsa* is established on admitting the *saṃskāra* arising out of the experience of the *imagined* world. Hence, the theory of *adhyāsa* and that of an imagined, superimposed world can be shown to depend on one another.

The Advaitin may argue that even an imagined, unreal object can be known directly, as is evident from the illusion of a snake in a rope. Here the direct knowledge does not depend on the reality of the object. It is produced by some defects. Similarly, the Advaitin points out, the illusory cognition of Brahman as the world is possible because of the defect of *avidyā*, even though the object known is unreal.

In the Nimbārkist's opinion, however, the Advaitin's reasoning is unsound. He argues that the Advaitin cannot maintain that the concerned defect, *avidyā*, is real. According to the Advaitin Brahman is the only reality. If he admits the reality of *avidyā*, then his monistic philosophy will be contradicted. Neither can the Advaitin consistently maintain that *avidyā* is unreal. *Avidyā* is supposed by the Advaitin to be the cause of the appearance of the world. Yet, an unreal cause can never produce anything. The productive cause is always a real existent.[6]

The Advaitin may suggest that even an illusorily cognised snake is seen to produce fear and trembling. Similarly, even the unreal *avidyā* may be said to produce the appearance of the world. The Nimbārkist retorts by saying that only a thing that possesses the power to produce an effect can be admitted to be a cause of the effect. Yet, an unreal entity can never have such a power.[7] Moreover, what produces fear and trembling in the victim of illuson is the knowledge of the real snake, and not an unreal and imaginary snake. For example, a small boy is seen to catch a snake. The reason is, he does not have any knowledge that a snake is poisonous and bites.[8]

The Advaitin maintains that the *saṃskāra* which causes the present *adhyāsa* in this *kalpa* (cycle) of existence is the product of an experience of the world imagined in a previous *kalpa* of existence. The imagination of the world in that previous *kalpa* is, in its turn, produced by the *saṃskāra* of the experience of a world imagined in another foregoing order of existence. The imagination of the world in that foregoing order of existence is also a result of the *saṃskāra* of the experience of a world in another earlier cycle of existence. In this way, each *saṃskāra* of a cycle of existence being a product of the experience of an earlier cycle, the chain of *saṃskāras*, in the Advaitin's opinion,

is a beginningless (*anādi*) one. The Nimbārkist argues that since the series of *saṃskāras*, as well as Brahman are thus conceived by the Advaitin to be beginningless, both of them must be admitted to have similar sort of existence. Hence, *saṃskāra* (and its product), *adhyāsa,* must be acknowledged to be ultimate reality (*pāramārṭhika-satya*) like Brahman. In that case the Advaitin is not entitled to claim that Brahman alone is the ultimate reality.[9]

The Advaitin may argue that being a product of the perception of a superimposed world, *saṃskāra* is an effect of superimposition. Accordingly, it is unreal. The Nimbārkist refutes this argument by saying that a *saṃskāra* is inferred from the result, the erroneous superimposition. Hence, *saṃskāra* cannot be said to be superimposed, and thus, unreal, before the existence of the erroneous superimposition. A *saṃskāra* is inferred to exist as a cause of an error after the erroneous cognition takes place. Thus, before the erroneous cognition occurs, *saṃskāra*, which is inferred from its effect, the error, cannot itself be said to be a superimposed erroneous entity. The Nimbārkist points out that since the existence of erroneous superimposition, proposed by the Advaitin, is a disputed fact, and is yet to be established, *saṃskāra*, the cause of superimposition, cannot be held by the Advaitin to be an unreal superimposed entity itself. A *saṃskāra* must, the Nimbārkist argues, be said to be a real cause of *adhyāsa* by the Advaitin. A real entity alone can be known and can be said to be the cause of superimposition. As a superimposed entity *saṃskāra* is unreal. It cannot be known and hence cannot be said to be the cause of *adhyāsa* (superimposition). An unknown *saṃskāra* cannot be taken to be the cause of *adhyāsa*. The Nimbārkist concludes the argument by saying that *saṃskāra*, the cause of an erroneous superimposition, must be acknowledged by the Advaitin to be real. And such an acknowledgement contradicts

the absolute monism of the Advaitin (according to which, Brahman is the only ultimate reality.)[10]

C

Inappropriateness Of The First *Adhyāsa* Due To The Absence Of The Locus And Causes Of *Adhyāsa*

Mādhavamukunda argues that the causes of *adhyāsa*, namely, *saṃskāra*, *sādṛsyajñāna*, *doṣa* etc. exist in the person who is the subject of the erroneous cognition. But, in the first *adhyāsa* the *āśraya* (locus) of *saṃskāra* and *doṣa* are themselves unestablished. The *jīva* is supposed to be the *āśraya* of *saṃskāra* and *doṣa*. Yet *saṃskāra* and *doṣa* of the *jīva* cannot be the cause of the first erroneous *adhyāsa*. Because *saṃskāra* and *doṣa* of the *jīva* are the effects of *adhyāsa*, they are established after the occurrence of *adhyāsa*.(According to the Advaitin, *jīva* is superimposed by *avidyā*.) So how can the *saṃskāra* and *doṣa* subsisting in the *jīva*, which succeeds *adhyāsa*, be the causes of the preceding *adhyāsa* prompted by *avidyā*? Neither can pure Brahman be established as the *āśraya* of *saṃskāra* and *doṣa*, as in that case the purity of Brahman has to be abandoned.[11]

Moreover, *adhyāsa* is caused by the previous knowledge of the similarity of the superimposed object, the *pradhāna*, and the *adhiṣṭhāna* (substratum) of *adhyāsa*. This is obvious from the characterization of *adhyāsa* as an appearance of an object similar to the remembered object (*smṛtirūpaḥ* = *smaryamānasadṛśaḥ*).[12] Mādhavamukunda points out that the *adhiṣṭhāna* of *adhyāsa*, Brahman, is *nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa*. So how can such an attributeless Brahman be said to have any attribute similar to anything? Hence, due to the absence of any similarity, the world cannot be said to be superimposed on Brahman.[13]

The Advaitin may argue that in the case of an unconditional error (*nirupādhika-bhrama*) like the illusion of a yellow conchshell, the error occurs without any similarity between the object superimposed and the substratum of error. Hence, there is no definite rule that all errors are due to similarity. The Nimbārkist, however, says that even in the case of the illusion of the yellow conchsell, there is similarity between the superimposed object and the substratum of illusion. Both the white conchshell and the yellow thing are substances. Hence, it must be admitted that both the objects are similar so far as both are substances.[14]

The Advaitin may say that the knowledge of similarity is only the indirect cause of such a cognition. It only awakens the latent *saṃskāra*, which produces the memory. And the memory of the remembered object works as one of the causes of the erroneous superimposition. The awakening of *saṃskāra* cannot be said to be brought about only by the knowledge of similarity. Past merits and demerits (*adṛṣṭa*) can also, the Advaitin contends, awaken *saṃskāra*, even in the absence of the knowledge of similarity.

In the opinion of the Nimbārkist, unseen merits and demerits cannot be said to awaken *saṃskāra*. A cause can be inferred only after the effect appears on the scene. Hence, the unseen merits and demerits can be inferred only after the appearance of the erroneous cognition of *adhyāsa*. As a result, there is no valid cognition proving the existence of such unseen merits and demerits as producers of *saṃskāra* before the occurrence of an *adhyāsa*.[15]

D
Brahman Cannot Be The Substratum (*Adhiṣṭhāna*) of *Adhyāsa*

Only that can be *adhiṣṭhāna* (substratum) of *adhyāsa*,

the Nimbārkist argues, which is known in its general characteristics, but remains unknown in its specific characteristics.[16] Brahman, however, in the opinion of the Advaitin, is attributeless. Hence, since the attributeless Brahman cannot be known either in its general or in its specific characteristics, how can such a Brahman be said to be the *adhiṣṭhāna* of *adhyāsa*?

The Nimbārkist further points out that Brahman, according to the Advaitin, cannot have any specific quality, in addition to Its essence. Hence, it would make no sense to assert that Brahman is the *adhiṣṭhāna* (substratum) of *adhyāsa*, in the sense that It is known in Its general properties, but remains unknown it Its specific properties.[17]

Advaitins say that although Brahman is *ṇirguṇa*, yet, the general and specific qualities of Brahman are really imagined in Brahman. Brahman is *ädhiṣṭhāna* of *adhyāsa* inasmuch as Its imagined general qualities are known, while Its imagined specific qualities remaiṇ unknown. Mādhavamukunda and Śrinivāsācārya argue that since the imagined qualities of Brahman are due to *adhyāsa*, the Advaitin will be forced to admit that on the occasion of the first *adhyāsa* on Brahman, *nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa* Brahman has neither general nor specific qualities. In that case, one of the causes of *adhyāsa*, namely, *samprayoga*, the general knowledge of the *adhiṣṭhāna* of Brahman is absent. Hence, in the absence of such a cause, the first *adhyāsa* on Brahman would not be possible at all.[18]

Neither is it reasonable to claim that the general and specific properties are imagined in Brahman. The reason is, such imagined properties cannot be objects of either nescience or of the knowledge of the real (*tattvajñāna*). (They cannot be objects of nescience, as they are created by nescience itself.) Moreover, ignorance of that specific quality which is the object

of the sublating knowledge (*vādhaka-jñāna*) is the cause of the superimposition on the *adhiṣṭhāna*. In the case of the illusion of silver, the sublating knowledge is the knowledge of the nacre. The ignorance of the nacre is the cause of the superimposition of silver, in the *adhiṣṭhāna*, nacre. Yet, if the specific qualities of Brahman, Its complete bliss etc. (*purṇānandādi*) are said to be the products of imagination, then it can no longer be said that ignorance of the specific quality, which is the object of the sublating knowledge, is the cause of the superimposition on the *adhiṣṭhāna*. The reason is, the imagined qualities are the products of nescience; and the object of nescience (namely, silver) and the object of the sublating knowledge (namely, nacre) are never identical.

Moreover, if the Advaitin claims that the quality of *svaprakāśatva* (self-revelation) of Brahman is imagined (superimposed), then what would be the cause of the superimposition of that quality on the substratum, Brahman? The quality of *svaprakāśatva* cannot itself be the cause of the superimposition of *svaprakāśatva* on the substratum of Brahman. If some other *svaprakāśatva* is said to be the cause of the superimposition, then the Advaita reasoning will suffer from the defect of an, infinite regress. (The other *svaprakāśatva* will require some other *svaprakāśatva* as the cause of the superimposition, and the third *svaprakāśatva* will need some other *svaprakāśatva* to serve as the cause of the superimposition, and so on *ad infinitum*.)

The Advaitin cannot make his position free from the defects mentioned above by claiming that the imagined general and specific qualities of Brahman are members of a beginningless series of imaginations. If imaginations form such a beginningless series, then it must be admitted that even the essential qualities of Brahman in each cycle of existence are

the results of imagination of the previous cycle of existence. Consequently, Brahman Itself becomes the product of imagination. Such a Brahman would then not only be imaginary, It would also be a non-eternal product.[19]

The Advaitin may say that, ignorance of the specific qualities of an *adhiṣṭhāna* does not make the latter *adhiṣṭhāna* of *adhyāsa*. What makes something *adhiṣṭhāna* of *adhyāsa* is the absence of knowledge which is the opposite of an erroneous cognition. In the illusion of silver, there is absence of the knowledge, 'this is a nacre'. The latter knowledge is the opposite of the illusory cognition of silver. The absence of this knowledge makes the nacre the *adhiṣṭhāna* of the illusion. In the case of *adhyāsa* of the world, the exclusive knowledge of Brahman, consisting of a mental mode arising from the Upaniṣadic statements, sublates the *adhyāsa*. In erroneous *adhyāsa* there is absence of this sublating knowledge. Hence, the absence of such a knowledge makes Brahman the *adhiṣṭhāna* of *adhyāsa*.

The Nimbārkist does not agree with the Advaitin's argument. The object of a knowledge which sublates an erroneous cognition must have a limiting property (*paricchedaka-dharma*) by means of which it excludes others. In the illusion of silver, the object of the sublating knowledge, 'this is nacre', has a limiting property. By means of this property it sublates the illusion. The limiting property of nacrehood (*śuktitva*) remains in an unknown form in a nacre at the time of illusion. Brahman, according to the Advaitin, is *nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa*. Hence, any such limiting property, which can be the object of a sublating knowledge, cannot remain in an uncognised form in Brahman on the occasion of *adhyāsa*. Brahman cannot, accordingly, be the *adhiṣṭhāna* of the *adhyāsa* of the world.[20]

E

Refutation Of The View That *Adhyāsa* Is Beginningless

Moreover, since in the first *adhyāsa* there is no *jīva* as the locus of the general knowledge of the *adhiṣṭhāna*, no *adhyāsa* is possible. *Jīva* is the product of *adhyāsa*. Hence, the cause of *adhyāsa*, the general knowledge of the *adhiṣṭhāna*, cannot exist in the *jīva*, himself a result of *adhyāsa*.

The Advaitin may argue that only an *adhyāsa* which has a beginning depends on causes like the knowledge of the general properties of *adhiṣṭhāna* coupled with ignorance of the specific properties. Yet, the beginningless *adhyāsa* does not depend on such defects like the lack of knowledge of the specific properties of the *adhiṣṭhāna* . The Nimbārkist, however, points out that an *anādi* (beginningless) *adhyāsa* is both contrary to experience and reason. An *adhyāsa* is always due to defects. As an effect, *adhyāsa* is never possible without its causes, namely, defects. Since *adhyāsa* is always due to causes, it always has a beginning. *Adhyāsa* can never be *anādi* (beginningless). Mādhavamukunda strengthens the Nimbārkist's argument with the help of a positive (*anvaya*) and a negative (*vyatireka*) concomitance (*vyāpti*): 'Whatever is an *adhyāsa* always has a beginning. For example the illusion of silver'. 'Whatever is beginningless, is not an *adhyāsa*. For example, *ātman* (self)'.

The above positive and negative concomitances are possible only in the case of an *adhyāsa* with a beginning. Such positive and negative concomitances are never possible with regard to the *anādi* (beginningless) *adhyāsa* advocated by the Advaitins. Hence, Mādhavamukunda concludes, there is

nothing like a beginningless *adhyāsa*.[21]

F

Refutation Of *Adhyāsa* On *Ātman*

i

According to the Advaitin, *ātman* is really identical with Brahman, pure consciousness. Yet, due to ignorance, we know the *ātman* as *aham* (I). Thus the sense of 'I' (*ahamartha*) is superimposed on *ātman*. The Nimbārkist rejects such a superimposition. Superimposition is not possible without sense-object-contact. But *ātman* is never an object; the senses can never be in contact with *ātman*.

The Advaitin may argue that *ātman* is known as *aham* (I) in the day to day life. Thus *ātman* appears as an object in the erroneous cognition of pure consciousness as an 'I'.

The Nimbārkist shows the Advaita view suffers from the defect of mutual interdependence. According to the Advaitin, *ātman* becomes an object of knowledge when there is *adhyāsa*. Yet, *adhyāsa* is possible only when the *ātman* becomes an object of erroneous cognition.

The Advaitin is not entitled to say that, since *adhyāsa* of the *aham* (I) on pure consciousness is *anādi*, it is not due to any defect. Since *adhyāsa* is always due to defects, it can, never be *anādi*.[22]

ii

The Advaitin speaks of a *dehātmaikyādhyādhyāsa*. In this *adhyāsa* there is a superimposition of the properties of body on *ātman*, and the *ātman* is erroneously supposed to be

identical with the body. The examples of such *dehātmaikyādhyādhyāsa* are such cognitions as : 'I am a brahmin', 'I am embodied', 'I am a man', 'I am blind', 'I am thin', 'I am dark'. The Nimbārkist, however, argues that in these examples cited, there is no superimposition of the body on the *ātman*. These cognitions are not erroneous; they are valid. Actually, we naturally have the knowledge of the distinction between *ātman* and the body. We are aware of the fact that, 'the self-same I who obeyed my parents in childhood, am now enjoying the company of children and grand children'. Such an awareness clearly shows we all naturally have the knowledge of the distinction between our bodies and ourselves. We naturally feel that in spite of the changes of the body, from childhood to old age, our *ātman* remains unchanged. When I feel, '*Aham dehī*' (I am embodied), I feel, 'I have a body'. For example, when I say, '*Aham gehī*' (I am housed), I never feel identical with my house. I mean only to say, 'I have a house'. As a matter of fact, different kinds of awareness like, 'my house', 'my eyes', ' my hand', 'my body' clearly indicate a distinction between the possesser I, and the possessed house, eyes, hand, body. While saying, 'I am a brahmin', I feel that I am a conscious *jīva* who is associated with the body of a brahmin. When I say, 'I am a man', I feel that I am associated with a human body. Similarly, when I feel, 'I am blind', 'I am dark', 'I am thin', I feel, I am associated with a body without sight; I am associated with a dark body; I am associated with a thin body. That the association and dissociation of *ātman* with a body is a reality is evident from the Kaṭha Upaniṣadic statement, "*Atmendriyamanojukto bhoktā ityāhurmanīṣiṇah.*" (The great sages say that the *ātman* becomes an enjoyer by being associated with the mind and the senses. Kaṭha Up. 3.4.) Thus, the examples cited by the Advaitin do not prove *dehātmaikyādhyādhyāsa*.[23]

iii

It is to be noted in this connection that the 'sense of I' (*ahamartha*), according to the Advaitin, is not really the essence of *ātman*. It is superimposed on *ātman*. According to the Nimbārkist, however, the I-sense (*ahamartha*) is a real constituent of *ātman*. Nimbārkists like Keśavakāśmīrī Bhaṭṭa, Puruṣottamācārya and Mādhavamukunda establish that the I-consciousness (*ahamartha*) is really *ātman* with the help of the sources of valid cognition like perception, inference and verbal testimony.

That the 'I-consciousness' is *ātman* is clear from our perception of the form: (a) 'I know' ('*Aham jānāmi*'), (b) 'I feel' ('*Ahamanubhavāmi*'), (c) 'I wish' ('*Ahamicchāmi*'). (It has already been established that, according to the Nimbārkist, the self is a knower, enjoyer and agent.)

The 'I-consciousness' (*ahamartha*) can be proved to be really integral to *ātman* with the help of an inference of the form: "The I (*aham*) attains *mokṣa*, since it is the agent of actions which are conducive to *mokṣa*. For example, the person who performs sacrifices (*yajamāna*), and who is the agent of actions which are conducive to the attainment of heaven, attains heaven."[24] (The intended meaning of the inference is that, since the 'I-substance' attains liberation, it must be *ātman*. The *ātman* alone can be said to be liberated.)

The above inference in the positive (*anvayī*) form has been strengthened with the help of an inference in the negative form (*vyatirekī-anumāna*): "The non-*ātman* does not inhere in the I-consciousness (*ahamartha*). The reason is, non-*ātman* inheres only in things which are not *ātman*. For example, potness inheres only in things which are non-*ātman*. [And it thus does not inhere in the I-substance (*ahamartha*).][25]

That the I-consciousness is really the essence of *ātman*, can be established also from the Upaniṣadic statements. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* states that Brahman "observed, I shall be many." ("*Tadaikṣata vahu syāṃ prajāyeya.*"). Since Brahman makes the statement in the first person, it is clearly established that the I-consciousness is the essence of *ātman*. *Chāndogya* statements like, "*Nāmarūpe vyākaravāni*"; "*Trivṛtaṃ trivṛtamekaikāṃ karavāni*"; "*Hantāham-imāstisro devatā* . . ."[26] also show that Brahman is making these statements in the first person. And in the third statement He refers to Himself as 'I'. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* the sage Vāmadeva is reported as saying, "*Ahaṃ manurabhavaṃ sūryaśca*". Hence, the sage Vāmadeva is described in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* clearly as feeling himself as 'I' even in the liberated state.

Different statements in the *Gītā* also establish that the I-consciousness is the essence of *ātman*. When Śrīkṛṣṇa says, "*Ahamātmā guḍākeśa* . . ." (*Gītā*, 10, 20.), He clearly indicates that I-consciousness is essentially *ātman*. The statement, "*Na tvevāhaṃ jātu nāsam*" ("I was never non-existent", *Gītā*, 2, 12.), makes it evident that the I-consciousness is not sublated in the past, present and future. The statement, "*Aham kṛtsnasya jagataḥ pravabhaḥ pralayastathā*" (*Gītā*, 7,6), clearly establishes that the 'I' as *ātman* is the cause of the origin and *pralaya* of the world. The statement, "*Vedaiśca sarvairahameva vedyaḥ*" (*Gītā*, 15,15), makes it evident that in all the Vedas the 'I' in the sense of *ātman* is clearly known. The statement, "*Ahaṃ tvāṃ sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayisyāmi*" (*Gītā*, 18, 66), indicates that the *ātman* as 'I' delivers one from sins. That the I-consciousness is integral to *ātman* is thus proved from perception, inference and verbal testimony.

The Advaitin tries to prove that the I-consciousness is not the essence of *ātman* with the help of an inference:

"*Ahamartha anātmā, suṣuptyādya-vasthā-nanugatatvāt sthūladehādivat.*"[27] (The I-consciousness is not *ātman*. The reason is, it does not persist in deep sleep. The example is the gross body.) The absence of the I-consciousness in deep sleep is evident from our knowledge of the form, "at the time of deep sleep I did not even know myself." ("*Etāvantaṃ kālaṃ māmapyahaṃ nāvedişam.*") The Advaitin argues, the I-consciousness is not integral to *ātman*, as it is not felt to be present in deep sleep, whereas the *ātman* is present in all states. The Nimbārkist rejects the Advaitin's contention in the following way:

> Even in deep sleep the I-consciousness is present. After waking from deep sleep one says, "*Etāvantaṃ kālaṃ māmapyahaṃ nāvedişam.*" Here two forms of the declension of the word, *asmad*, have been used. The word, '*mām*' is used in the accusative form, in the second case-ending. The word, '*aham*' is used in the nominative form in the first case-ending. When it is said, "*māmapyahaṃ nāvedişam*", what is said to be not known is the I-consciousness that is felt in the waking state, as associated with the body and cognised as *ātman*. Yet, it must be acknowledged that there is a knower who is aware of the fact that he/she did not know even himself/herself while he/she was sleeping deeply. This knower is referred to as '*aham*', unassociated with the body. Thus what is said to be absent in deep sleep is the sense of the 'I' associated with the body, and known in common parlance as *ātman*. Yet, the knower 'I' unassociated with the body, is not said to be absent even in deep sleep. If such a knower 'I' were absent, he could not say, "I did not even know myself in deep sleep." Hence it is established that the knower 'I' is essentially the *ātman*.[28]

Section II
Criticism Of The Concept Of *Ajñāna*

The Advaitin considers *ajñāna* or *avidyā* to be the root cause of *adhyāsa*. *Ajñāna* is considered by the Advaitin to be *anādi* (beginningless) and *jñānanāśya* (destroyable by knowledge). Four alternative definitions of this *ajñāna* is found in Advaita literature. The Nimbārkist considers all the different definitions of *ajñāna* and rejects them all as being defective.

A
Criticism Of Definitions Of *Ajñāna*

(i) One of the definitions of *ajñāna* is: "*Anādi bhāvatve sati jñānanivartyatvam*." This definition is a slightly altered form of the definition of *ajñāna* given by Citsukhācārya in his *Tattvapradīpikā*.[29] According to this definition, *ajñāna* is a beginningless positive entity, which is removed by the intuitive knowledge of Brahman. Nimbārkists like Śrīnivāsācārya and Mādhavamukunda reject this definition. In their opinion this definition is both too narrow (as it does not apply to cases where it should) and too wide (as it applies to cases which are not *ajñāna*). Sometimes, it even leads to an absurd situation.

This definition is too narrow. It does not apply to the illusion of silver in nacre. Since the nacre originates at a particular time, it is not beginningless. The *ajñāna* which covers the consciousness limited by nacre is, accordingly, also not beginningless. As this *ajñāna* is not beginningless, the definition of *ajñāna* is not applicable to it.

There are cases of *ajñāna* which are of the nature of negation (*abhāva*). Take the case of the erroneous cognition of the absence of a pot on a floor where the pot actually exists. Here the *adhyāsa* being of the form of negation cannot be produced by a positive (*bhāvarūpa*) *ajñāna*. In this case the error is produced by an *ajñāna*, yet the *ajñāna* is not a positive

entity. Accordingly, the definition of *ajñāna* as a beginningless positive entity, fails to apply to this case. The definition is thus too narrow.

Vācaspati Miśra is of the opinion that pure Brahman is never an object of *vṛtti-jñāna* (knowledge in the form of a mental modification). If we follow Vācaspati Miśra's opinion, then we cannot say that *ajñāna* covering pure Brahman is destroyed by the knowledge of Brahman (inasmuch as Brahman cannot be known by a *vṛtti-jñāna*). Since this *ajñāna* is not destroyed by knowledge, the definition of *ajñāna* as destroyable by knowledge (*jñāna-nivartya)* is not applicable to it, Thus the definition of *ajñāna* is too narrow.

According to Advaita Vedānta, a person continues to live in an embodied form even after direct intuition of Brahman. Such a *jīvamukta-puruṣa* (see p. 142) still has his sense of difference between things. He is sometimes seen to maintain himself by begging. It can be inferred from his behaviour that he still suffers from traces of *ajñāna* even after his direct intuition of Brahman. This case then constitutes a case of *ajñāna* which is not destroyed by direct intuition of Brahman. And the definition of *ajñāna* as '*jñānanivartya*' is not applicable to it. The definition of *ajñāna* is thus too narrow.

The definition fails to apply to the case of *sopādhika-bhrama* (erroneous cognition due to conditions)[30] of a crystal appearing to be red due to the presence of a hibiscus flower near it. Even if the victim of this erroneous cognition has the knowledge that the crystal is really colourless, he continues to have the illusion of the red crystal. Hence it cannot be said that his *ajñāna* is destroyed by knowledge. The definition of *ajñāna* as '*jñāna-nivartya'*, thus fails to apply to the case *of sopādhika-bhrama*. Hence, the definition of *ajñāna* as *jñāna-nivartya*' is too narrow.

According to the Advaitin, *adhyāsa* is possible due to the connection of consciousness with *ajñāna*. The Nimbārkist points out that the definition of *ajñāna* as that which is destroyed by knowledge applies to this connection. In the Advaita view all things except consciousness is destroyed by knowledge. Accordingly, this connection between consciousness and *ajñāna* must be destroyed by knowledge. As this connection is destroyed by knowledge, it ought to be considered as *ajñāna*, yet it is not *ajñāna*. According to the Advaitin, this connection is a real one. The definition of *ajñāna* is thus considered to be too wide.

Any cognition due to defects is a case of *ajñāna*. Yet, such a cognition, the Nimbārkist claims, can never be beginningless. Just as the illusion of silver in nacre, which is destroyed by knowledge, is not beginningless, similarly, any erroneous cognition due to defects, though destroyed by knowledge, is not beginningless. It is thus absurd to claim that *ajñāna* is necessarily beginningless.

Just as the beginningless and positive *ātman* is never destroyed by knowledge, in the same way, *ajñāna* which is supposed to be beginningless and positive, can never be said to be destroyed by knowledge. Thus the definition of *ajñāna* as that which is necessarily destroyed by knowledge appears to be absurd (*asambhava*).

The definition of *ajñāna* seems to be an absurd one on another account. *Ajñāna* is treated by the Advaitin to be distinct from existence and non-existent (*sadasad-vilakṣaṇa*) and indescribable (*anirvacanīya*).[31] How can such an *ajñāna* be defined by the Advaitin as *bhāvarūpa* (existent in nature)? The Nimbārkist thus points out that it is absurd to claim that *ajñāna* is *bhāvarūpa*.[32]

(ii) The Advaitin suggests another definition of *ajñāna*:

"*Bhramopādānatvam-ajñānam.*" [*Ajñāna* is that which is the material cause of an erroneous cognition.] In the Nimbārkist's opinion, even this definition is defective. This definition is found in Citsukhācārya's *Tattvapradīpikā*.[33] In the Nimbārkist's opinion, this definition is too narrow, as it fails to apply to the erroneous cognition of absence. Consider the erroneous cognition of the absence of a pot in a floor where the pot actually exists. According to the Advaitin, any object, appearing in an erroneous cognition, is a superimposition. Consequently, it is false, and is produced at a particular time. The Nimbārkist argues that only a positive entity, that is a product, is produced by a material cause. The cognition of absence is a negative entity, and a product. And a negative entity that is a product is never due to any material cause. Such a negative entity or absence is only produced by an auxiliary cause. For example, the posterior non-existence (*dhvaṃsābhāva*) of a pot, as a product, is the effect of an auxiliary cause like the stroke of a club. It transpires that an erroneous cognition of absence is caused by *ajñāna*, yet this *ajñāna* is not the material cause of this erroneous cognition. Since *ajñāna* is defined as the material cause of an erroneous cognition, the definition is not applicable to *ajñāna* in this case, and yet, *ajñāna* is definitely present in this case. Thus the definition is too narrow.

The Advaitin maintains that *jagat* is erroneously superimposed on Brahman. Advaitins differ among themselves regarding the material cause of this *jagat*. (i) According to some Advaitins, *māyā* (which is really *ajñāna*) is the material cause of the *jagat* and Brahman is the substratum of *māyā*. (ii) According to some others, Brahman, delimited by *māyā* (*māyāvacchinna-brahma*), is the material cause of the world. (iii) According to some Advaitins, however, both Brahman and *māyā* together constitute the material cause of the world.

The Nimbārkist cannot accept the view that *māyā* or

ajñāna is the material cause of *jagat* and Brahman is the substratum of *māyā* or *ajñāna*. *Jagat* will have to be considered to be unreal if *ajñāna* is its material cause. However, we have already shown[34] how the Nimbārkist refutes the Advaita view of the unreality of *jagat*. The Nimbārkist cannot accept even the Advaita contention that Brahman is the substratum of *ajñāna*. Brahman as pure consciousness cannot be the substratum of *ajñāna* which is totally opposed to it.

According to the second view quoted above, the Nimbārkist argues, Brahman Himself is the material cause of the erroneous cognition of Brahman as *jagat*, and *māyā* is His quality. Since Brahman is the material cause of the erroneous cognition, the definition of *ajñāna* as '*bhramopādānatva*' will be applicable to Brahman. Hence, the definition of *ajñāna* turns out to be too wide.

According to the third view quoted above, also, the Nimbārkist points out, Brahman is the material cause of the erroneous cognition of Brahman as *jagat*. Hence, as the definition of *ajñāna* applies to Brahman, the definition is really too wide in the Nimbārkist's view.[35]

(iii) *Ajñāna* is defined by some Advaitins as: "*Sākṣājjñānānivartyatvamajñānam*." (That which is terminated by direct knowledge is *ajñāna*.) This definition is possibly suggested by Prakāśātman. The Nimbārkist argues that this definition is too narrow. It does not apply to the *ajñāna* of the *jīvanmukta-puruṣa*. The *jīvanmukta* has traces of *ajñāna* left in him, even though he has directly intuited Brahman. Moreover, as we have already shown, according to Vācaspati Miśra, Brahman is not the object of *vṛtti-jñāna*. Hence, the *ajñāna* covering pure Brahman cannot be one that is terminated by the direct knowledge of Brahman. The *ajñāna* which causes *sopādhika-bhrama* (conditioned erroneous cognition) of a red

crystal is not destroyed by the knowledge that the crystal is really colourless. As this definition fails to apply to cases of *ajñāna* where it should, it is too narrow.[36]

(iv) *Ajñāna* is sometimes defined by the Advaitin as: "*Anādyupādānatve sati mithyātvamajñanatvam.*" (*Ajñāna* is a beginningless material cause and a false entity.) Like the definition, "*Bhramopādānatvamajñānatvam*", this definition is also too narrow. In addition, it leads to an absurdity.

This definition fails to apply to the erroneous cognition of absence, like the absence of a pot in a place where it actually exists. This erroneous cognition is caused by *ajñāna*. Yet this *ajñāna* is not the material cause of the erroneous cognition. The erroneous cognition of absence as a negative entity is not produced by any material cause. A false *ajñāna* is considered by the Advaitin to be different from the real (*sat*). Accordingly, the false *ajñāna*, different from the real, is utterly false (*tuccha*) like the sky-flower. Such an *ajñāna* can neither be beginningless, nor can it be a material cause. Accordingly, such an *ajñāna* is an impossibility.[37]

B

Impossibility Of The Locus Of *Ajñāna*

We have so far been engaged in showing that, according to the Nimbārkist, *ajñāna*, as conceived by the Advaitin, cannot be established, as all the definitions of *ajñāna* proposed by Advaitins are defective. We will now proceed to show that, in the opinion of the Nimbārkist, the Advaita concept of *ajñāna* cannot be held to be a valid one inasmuch as nothing can be established to be the *āśraya* (locus) of such an *ajñāna*

Brahman, as pure consciousness, cannot be held to be the *āśraya* of *ajñāna*. Just as darkness cannot co-exist with light, in the same way, *ajñāna* cannot exist in the locus of

Brahman as pure consciousness. Pure consciousness, as pure knowledge, is naturally opposed to *ajñāna*. As a matter of fact, knowledge terminates *ajñāna*. Thus Brahman cannot be locus of *ajñāna*.

Secondly, Brahman, as pure consciousness, cannot be a natural locus of *ajñāna*. If It is such a natural locus, then It can no longer be said to be pure. Moreover, like the other natural qualities of Brahman, such as omniscience, *ajñāna* will also be an eternal quality of Brahman. Consequently, *ajñāna* will never be terminated.

Neither can it be said that pure Brahman is the locus of *ajñāna* due to a condition (*upādhi*). According to the Advaitin, all things other than Brahman are imagined by *ajñāna*. Since the other thing itself is a product of *ajñāna*, *ajñāna* cannot be said to be due to that. If *ajñāna* is insisted to be caused by it, then it will constitute a case of mutual interdependence.

The Advaitin is not entitled to say either that qualified Brahman, i.e. omniscient *īśvara*, is the locus of *ajñāna*. The statement, 'the omniscient being is the locus of *ajñāna*' is as contradictory as the statement, 'the sun is the locus of darkness'. Moreover, since *īśvara* is conceived by the Advaitin to be imagined by *ajñāna*, He cannot be said to be omniscient. Someone may be said to be omniscient only if he /she is completely bereft of *ajñāna*. However, if *īśvara* is imagined by *ajñāna*, He cannot be said to be omniscient, as He is a product of *ajñāna*.

Nor can the *jīva* be said to be the locus of *ajñāna*.[38] *Jīva* according to the Advaitin, is a product of *ajñāna*. He is superimposed by *ajñāna*, and hence comes into being after *ajñāna*. Consequently, *jīva* cannot be the locus of *ajñāna*.[39]

C

Impossibility Of *Ajñāna*'s Object And Covering Action

According to the Nimbārkist, *ajñāna* cannot have any object. Neither can *ajñāna* cover anything. The object of *ajñāna* cannot be Brahman. Since, in the Advaitin's opinion, pure Brahman cannot be the object of knowledge, It cannot be the object of *ajñāna* either. It is an established rule that if anything cannot be the object of knowledge, it cannot be the object of nescience either. Neither can the *jīva* be the object of *ajñāna*. As a product of *ajñāna*, *jiva* succeeds *ajñāna*. Since the *jīva* does not exist at the same time as *ajñāna* does, *jīva* cannot be the object of *ajñāna*.

The Nimbārkist argues that *ajñāna* cannot be said to veil Brahman as pure consciousness. *Ajñāna* cannot cover the consciousness which forms the essence of Brahman. The self-revealing consciousness of Brahman is said to reveal *jagat*. If that consciousness itself is covered, the revelation of *jagat* would be impossible. Moreover, Brahman's self-revelation being Its essence, obstruction of that self-revelation will result in the disappearance of Brahman's essence. As a matter of fact, the self-revelation of Brahman is an eternally established fact. Hence it can never be said to disappear.

Nirviśeṣa Brahman cannot have any qualities other than Its essence. Hence, *ajñāna* cannot be said to conceal any other particular non-essential quality of Brahman. The Advaitin may argue that *ajñāna* covers only Brahman's quality of *ānanda*. It does not cover Its existence. The Nimbārkist however points out that in that case Brahman must be regarded as having parts; the *ānanda* part, which is covered, and Its other part, *sattā* (existence), which is revealed. Yet Brahman, according to the Advaitin is, partless.[40]

D

Impossibility Of The Occasioning Agent Of *Ajñāna*

The Nimbārkist asks the question: what can be considered to occasion *ajñāna*? (1) Does it occasion itself? (2) Is it occasioned by Brahman? (3) Is it occasioned by something other than Brahman?

Ajñāna , an insentient entity, cannot, the Nimbārkist argues, occasion itself. Neither can it be said to be occasioned by Brahman. Only a person who is subject to *adhyāsa* can, according to Advaitin, be an agent. Brahman, as pure consciousness, cannot have such agency and, consequently, It cannot be conceived to occasion *ajñāna*. The Nimbārkist points out that if Brahman is supposed to occasion *ajñāna*, It can no longer be conceived to be *nirviśeṣa*. Only a qualified being can perform action. An unqualified being is not capable of any action. Moreover, Brahman knows the evil effects that deities, men and animals suffer due to *ajñāna* or *avidyā*. How can It (who is completely independent in Its activities) wilfully occasion such *ajñāna* on Itself? (It must be kept in mind here that according to the Advaitin, Brahman is identical with the deities, men and animals.)

If, however, Brahman is said to be unaware of the evil effects of *ajñāna*, then It can no longer be considered to be omniscient. The Nimbārkist argues that it makes no sense to say that something other than Brahman occasions *ajñāna*. According to Advaita Vedānta, everything other than Brahman, is the product of *ajñāna*. A product of *ajñāna* necessarily succeeds *ajñāna*. And such a product cannot be said to occasion *ajñāna*.[41]

E

Rejection Of The Advaita View That *Ajñāna* Is Known By Perception, Inference And Verbal Testimony

In the opinion of the Nimbārkist there is no valid means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) by which *ajñāna*, as conceived by the Advaitin, is known.

(a) Impossibility Of Perception Of *Ajñāna*

The Nimbārkist argues that positive *ajñāna* cannot be known by perception. The Advaita Vedāntin points to certain instances of perception of *ajñāna*. Expressions like, '*Ahamajñaḥ*' (I am ignorant), '*Taduktamarthaṃ na jānāmi*' (I do not know the meaning of what you are saying) are, the Advaitin contends, proofs that *ajñāna* is perceived directly.

The Nimbārkist, however, points out that the instances cited by the Advaitin does not prove that *ajñāna* is directly perceived. He asks: what does the word, '*aham*' stand for? Does it stand for the pure consciousness of Brahman? Does it stand for the consciousness of Brahman limited by the adjunct, *ajñāna*? Does it stand for *jīva*?

The word, '*aham*', the Nimbārkist argues, does not stand for the pure consciousness of Brahman. If it does, then Brahman will be considered to be ignorant. Brahman will, consequently, not be held to be pure consciousness.

The word, '*aham*' does not stand for the consciousness of Brahman limited by the adjunct, *ajñāna*. The reason is, *ajñāna* which is supposed to be the limiting adjunct of Brahman has not been proved as yet. It has been referred to by the Advaitin, but it has not been proved to be a fact beyond dispute. Moreover, the Advaitin argument is vitiated by the defect of mutual interdependence. Brahman's limitation by the adjunct

of *ajñāna* is established by establishing the existence of *ajñāna*. The existence of *ajñāna*, however, can be established by establishing that Brahman is limited by the adjunct of *ajñāna*.

The word '*aham*' does not stand for *jīva*. *Jiva*, according to the Advaitin, is the effect of the superimposition of *ajñāna* on Brahman. Consequently, *jīva* is the succeeding effect of the superimposition. How can *jīva* then be supposed to perceive *ajñāna*, which, as his producer, precedes him?[42]

(b) Rejection Of The Advaita Inference Of Positive *Ajñāna*

The author of *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṃgraha* tries to prove the existence of positive *ajñāna* with the help of an inference. We will quote the inference in full in its original Sanskrit form.

"*Vimataṃ pramājñānaṃ*[43] *svaprāgabhāvavyatirikta-svaviṣayāvaraṇa-svanivartya-svadeśagata-vastvantarapūrvakam, aprakāśitārtha-prakāśakatvāt, andhakāre prathamot-panna-pradīpa-prabhāvat.*"[44] [Valid cognition is preceded by something else,[45] which is over and above its prior non-existence, which covers its own object, which is removed by itself (viz. by valid cognition), which exists in its own domain. The reason is, it reveals the unrevealed object. The example is, the first produced light of the lamp in darkness.] The example of the first produced lamplight shows that this light reveals the unrevealed object. Hence, it is preceded by darkness, another entity, which is different from the light's prior non-existence, which covers the object the light reveals, which is removed by the light, and which resides in the same domain the light occupies.

In this *anumāna*, *pramājñāna* is the *pakṣa* (subject). *Vastvantarapūrvakatva* (being preceded by something else) is

the *sādhya* (probandum) which is qualified by four qualities. The four qualities are: (i) *svaprāgabhāva-vyatirikta* (which is over above its prior non-existence), (ii) *svaviṣayāvaraṇa* (which covers its own object), (iii) *svanivartya* (which is removed by itself) and (iv) *svadeśagata* (which exists in the domain it occupies). *Aprakāśitārtha-prakāśakatva* (being the revealer of the unrevealed object) is the *hetu* (probans). *Andhakāre prathamotpanna pradīpaprabhā* (the first light of the lamp produced in darkness) is the *dṛṣṭānta* (example).

The inference of *ajñāna*, advanced by the author of *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṃgraha*, has been criticised deftly and extensively by the Nimbārkist. We are presenting, *very briefly* an account of their criticisms.

(i) Firstly, the Nimbārkist points out, the *pakṣa* of this *anumāna* is partially invalid. The *pakṣa* is *pramā-jñāna* (valid cognition) in general, and in order to show that it is the destroyer of *ajñāna* the Aḍvaitin has introduced the above inference. Although valid cognition is, in most cases, the destroyer of *ajñāna*, it is not so in all cases. Pleasure and pain are directly perceived. Since such a direct perception is uncontradicted, it is necessarily a valid cognition. Yet this valid cognition cannot, the Nimbārkist points out, be said to terminate *ajñāna*. According to the Advaitin, pleasure and pain are revealed by the witnessing consciousness, known as '*sākṣicaitanya*'.[46] Since pleasure and pain are eternally revealed by the witnessing consciousness, they can never remain unknown. That which is revealed by the witnessing consciousness can never be the object of *ajñāna*. Hence, the knowledge of pleasure and pain can never be said to terminate *ajñāna* regarding its objects.

Since ignorance regarding pleasure and pain is unestablished, the direct perception of them by the witnessing consciousness cannot be said to be the eliminator of ignorance.

As the knowledge of pleasure and pain is included in the *pakṣa*, *pramājñāna*, the latter can then be said to be partially invalid.

The Nimbārkist argues that, even if the mode (*vṛtti*) of *antaḥkaraṇa* is considered to be the *pakṣa*, the *pakṣa* will be rendered partially invalid. The mediate knowledge in the form of the mode of *antaḥkaraṇa* is also included in the *vṛtti-jñāna*. The mediate knowledge does not destroy any *ajñāna* regarding an object. For example, the inference of fire, in the hill, does not remove any ignorance, as the immediate perception of fire does. Since the mediate knowledge does not destroy ignorance regarding its object, the *pakṣa*, *pramā-jñāna*, is to be considered as partially invalid.[47]

Suppose that the immediate valid cognition (*pramā*) in the form of a mental mode is taken as the *pakṣa*, *pramājñāna*. The Nimbārkist argues that even this *pakṣa* is partially invalid. Even this immediate mental mode does not dispel ignorance regarding the general (*sāmānya*) character of the object known. In the case of *adhyāsa*, its substratum has both a general (*sāmānya*) characteristic and a specific (*viśeṣa*) characteristic. The general characteristic is known and the specific one remains unknown. In the case of *adhyāsa* of silver in the form, 'this is silver', no one is ignorant of the 'this' part, which corresponds to the general characteristic of the substratum of *adhyāsa*. It is only with regard to the specific characteristic of the object that someone has ignorance. Since error is not possible with regard to the general characteristic of the object known, the material cause of error, viz. *ajñāna*, is absent here. Accordingly, the immediate valid cognition is not the remover of *ajñāna* in this case. Thus there is valid cognition regarding the general characteristic of the object known; yet this cognition does not dispel any *ajñāna* regarding the object.[48]

(ii) The *sādhya* (probandum) of the inference is,

according to the Nimbārkist, inappropriate. Firstly, the qualification, *svaprāgābhāvavyatirikta* (which is over and above its own prior non-existence), of the *sādhya*, *ajñāna*, is unnecessary and inappropriate. According to the Advaita Vedāntin, valid cognition removes only *ajñāna*. It cannot remove anything else. Hence it cannot remove its prior non-existence. Accordingly, the qualification, *svaprāgabhāva-vyatirikta* serves no function in the inference. It is unnecessary here. If the Advaitin tries to say that the prior non-existence of valid cognition is itself *ajñāna*, then he will have to admit that non-existence of valid cognition is *ajñāna*. And in that case, since *ajñāna* would be identical with the non-existence, the Advaitin can no longer insist that *ajñāna* is a positive (*bhāva-rūpa*) entity.

Secondly, the qualification, *svaviṣayāvaraṇa* (which covers its own object), of the *sādhya*, is also, the Nimbārkist claims, inappropriate. The object covered by *ajñāna* is its locus (*āśraya*). According to the Advaitin, however, any insentient object cannot be the locus of *ajñāna*. Hence it is not possible for *ajñāna* to cover any insentient object. Pure consciousness is undoubtedly the locus of *ajñāna*. However, since pure consciousness, according to the Advaitin, is the witness (*sākṣin*) of even *ajñāna*, it always reveals itself. Hence *ajñāna* is incapable of covering pure consciousness. Since *ajñāna* cannot cover either any insentient object or pure consciousness, the qualification, *svaviṣayāvaraṇa*, is an inappropriate qualification of *ajñāna*.[49]

Thirdly, the qualification, *svadeśagata* (which exists in its own domain), is also an inappropriate qualification of *ajñāna*. The Nimbārkist argues that *ajñāna* and valid cognition cannot occupy the same domain. The reason is, according to the Advaitin, *ajñāna* has for its locus only consciousness. However,

valid cognition, in the form of a mental mode (*antaḥkaraṇa-vṛtti*) does not have for its locus only consciousness. According to the Advaitin, *antaḥkaraṇa* is not conscious by itself. It is conscious because the light of consciousness is reflected on it. Accordingly, it cannot be said that *antaḥkaraṇavṛtti*, as a mode of unconscious *antaḥkaraṇa*, has as its locus, only consciousness. Hence *ajñāna* and valid cognition cannot occupy the same domain.

Moreover, *ajñāna* can act as a cover only by being located in its object. If valid cognition has the same object as its locus, then that object cannot be said to be covered by *ajñāna*. For this reason also *ajñāna* and valid cognition cannot be located in the same domain.

(iii) The *hetu* (probans) of the inference, the Nimbārkist points out, is intrinsically unestablished in the *pakṣa* (subject). It is a *svarūpāsiddha-hetu*. The *hetu* here is, *aprakāśitārthaprakāśakatva* (revealing of the unrevealed object). The Nimbārkist argues that this *hetu* is unestablished in the *pakṣa*, when the latter is taken to be valid cognition (*pramājñāna*). This valid cognition is *prakāśasvabhāva*; it is of the essence of illumination / revelation. Yet it is not the productive cause of the revelation (*prakāśaka* = *prakāśajanaka*) of any (unrevealed object). Since *prakāśakatva* (the character of being a revealer) is not present in the *pakṣa*, valid cognition, the *hetu*, *aprakāśitārthaprakāśakatva* cannot also be present in the *pakṣa*, *pramājñāna*.

The real productive causes of the revelation of the object are the senses. However, it is to be noted here that although the senses are the revealer of unknown objects (*aprakāśitārthaprakāśaka*), yet they do not possess the power of removing *ajñāna* (power of *ajñānanivartakatva*). Now *ajñānanivartakatva* is a necessary characteristic of

pramājñāna.[50] Since the senses are not remover of *ajñāna*, they are not *pramājñāna*. It transpires that the *hetu*, *aprakāśitārthaprakāśakatva* is present both in *pramājñāna* and in senses, which are not *pramājñāna*. Accordingly, it is unestablished in the *pakṣa*, *pramājñāna*.

Moreover, *aprakāśitārthaprakāśakatva* is present both in a case[51] where the *sādhya*, *ajñāna*, (which is removed later on by *pramājñana*) is present, and in the senses, (which do not remove any previous *ajñāna*), where the *sādhya* is absent. Accordingly, *aprakāśitārtha- prakāśakatva* is an inconclusive reason (*vyabhicāri-hetu*) in the inference concerned.

The Nimbārkist further argues that *prakśakatva* of the *hetu* cannot be interpreted even as the remover of darkness (*tamonivartakatva*), inasmuch as there is no remover of darkness as a *hetu*, which is common to both the *dṛṣṭānta* (example) and the *pakṣa*. (*Hetu*, *dhūma*, is present both in the *pakṣa*, the hill, and *dṛṣṭānta*, the kitchen.) Yet, the remover of darkness which acts as the *hetu* in the case of *pramajñāna* is capable of removing *ajñāna*, whereas the remover of darkness which acts as the *hetu* in the case of the light of the lamp, is capable of removing physical darkness. And the light removes that darkness, and not *ajñāna*.

Moreover, if the *hetu*, *prakāśakatva*, is interpreted as 'being the remover of *ajñāna*', then since the property of 'being the remover of *ajñāna*', is present in the *pakṣa*, *pramājñāna*, the attempt to infer the 'removal of *ajñāna*' in the *pakṣa*, *pramājñāna*, with the *hetu*, 'being the remover of ignorance', will lead to the absurd situation that the *sādhya* and the *hetu* become identical.[52]

(iv) The Nimbārkist claims that a contrary inference (*satpratipakṣa*), proving the opposite of what the Advaitin is trying to prove can be established. Hence, the Nimbārkist argues

that the Advaitia inference of *ajñāna* is not free from the defect of *satpratipakṣa-hetvābhāsa*.

The Advaitin claims that *ajñāna*, which is both a positive and beginingless entity, is removed by *jñāna* (cognition). [*Anādibhāvatve sati jñananivartyatvam.*[53]] Taking his cue from this characterization of *ajñāna,* the Nimbārkist says that the following contrary inference can be formulated:

"*Anaditve sati bhāvatvaṃ, na nivartya-niṣṭhaṃ, anādibhāva-mātra-vṛttitvāt, ātmavat*." [A positive entity which is beginningless is not removed by anything. The reason is: the characteristics of being both beginningless and positive can be found only in a beginningless and positive entity, and such an entity is not removed by anything else. For example, selfhood (which is beginingless and positive) exists only in the beginningless positive entity called self, and such a self is not annihilated by anything.] In this way, the Nimbārkist says, it is possible to produce an inference contrary to the Advaita inference of a positive and beginningless *ajñāna* removable by valid cognition.[54]

(v) The Nimbārkist maintains that the example cited in the Advaita inference is also defective. The example considered is: *andhakāre prathamotpanna-pradīpaprabhā* (the first produced light of the lamp in darkness). The Nimbārkist argues that the word, '*prathama*' (first) used in the example is useless. The flames of the second, third, fourth moments etc. are not produced in darkness. Only the flame produced at the first moment is produced in darkness. The flames of the second, third, fourth moments are produced while the place is already illuminated.

(c) Rejection Of The Advaita View That *Ajñāna* Can Be Established By Verbal Testimony

The Advaita Vedantin thinks that positive *ajñāna* has been referred to in the *Ṛgveda*. In the *nāsadīya sukta* of the *Ṛgveda* it is stated: "*Nāsadāsīnnosadāsīttadānim.*"[55] "*Tama āsīttamasā guḍhamagre.*"[56] The Advaitin opines that the *nāsadīya sukta* means to say: "At the time of *pralya* there was neither the non-existent (*asat*) nor the existent (*sat*); there was only *tamaḥ = ajñāna.*" These Upaniṣadic statements act as the verbal testimony proving the existence of positive *ajñāna*. (In the Advaitin's opinion both the words '*asat*' and '*tamaḥ*' signify *ajñāna*.)

The Nimbārkist argues that the Advaitin cannot establish the fact that the Ṛgvedic text points out the existence of a positive *ajñāna*. The word, '*sat*', in the Ṛgvedic text stands for the primary elements of earth, water and fire. The word, '*a-sat*', on the other hand, signifies the primary elements of air and ether. In defence of his thesis that '*asat*' signifies elements of air and ether, the Nimbārkist quotes another Ṛgvedic text. The text declares: "*Yadanyadvāyoścāntarikṣācca etat sat, vāyurantarīkṣaṃ cāsat.*" This text declares that elements other than air and ether are '*sat*', and air and ether are '*asat*'.

In the opinion of the Nimbārkist, the word, '*tamaḥ*', occurring in the Ṛgvedic text does not stand for *ajñāna*. The word '*tamaḥ*' in the Ṛgvedic text really signifies *prakṛti*. In support of his argument the Nimbārkist quotes a Ṛgvedic verse: "*Akṣaraṃ tamasi līyate.*" The Nimbārkist interprets this text as signifying that *akṣara* Brahman assumes the form of the unmanifest *prakṛti*.

If the Ṛgvedic *sūkta* be interpreted, the Nimbārkist points out, in the Advaitic manner, to imply that at *pralaya*

there was neither *sat* nor *asat*, then that interpretation would lead to a contradiction. '*Asat*' stands for an unreal chimera. It can neither be acquired nor rejected. And we cannot negate anything like '*asat*', which is a chimera, and consequently, cannot be attained in any way. Accordingly, the statement, '*asat* did not exist at *pralaya*', would be a contradictory statement. An existent entity alone can be negated, and not a non-existent chimera.

The Nimbārkist concludes that when the Ṛgvedic *sūkta* asserts, "Neither *asat* nor *sat* existed at *pralaya*," it is to be understood as expressing the fact that neither ether and air, nor earth, water and fire existed at *pralaya*.

The Nimbārkist, in this way, argues that the words, '*sat*' and '*asat*' in the Ṛgvedic *sūkta* refer respectively to: (i) earth, water, fire and (ii) air, ether. If the '*asat*' refers to the unreal *ajñāna*, then it makes no sense to say, "*Nāsadāsīnnosadāsīttadānīm*." [Then (at the time of *pralaya*) there was neither *asat* nor *sat*.] *Asat*, in the sense of an unreal chimera, can never exist at any time. Hence, it cannot be meaningfully said that *asat* was non-existent at the time of *pralaya*. Moreover, if *sat* is taken in the sense of 'existent', then by saying that '*sat* was not existent', the negation or non-existence of everything else is also implied thereby. However, just after the statement, "*Nāsadāsīnnosadāsīttadānīm*", the *Ṛgveda* adds, "*Nāsīd rajo no vyoma*" (there was neither *rajaḥ* nor ether at *pralaya*). Since by saying, '*sat* was not existent (at the time of *pralaya*)', the nonexistence of everything is implied, why does the *Ṛgveda* add, "*Nāsīd rajo no vyoma*"? Is the non-existence of everything not implied by the statement, "*Na sadāsīt*"?

In the Nimbārkist's opinion, the Ṛgvedic *sūkta* really declares that at the time of *pralaya* the five elements of earth,

water, fire, air and ether are all submerged in the unmanifest *prakṛti*. The word, '*tamaḥ*', in the Ṛgvedic *sūkta*, as the Nimbārkist sees it, stands, as we have already shown, for *prakṛti*. In this way the Nimbārkist argues that *ajñāna* cannot be said to have been mentioned in Ṛgvedic *sūkta* stated above.

The Advaitin says that even the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* speaks clearly of *ajñāna / avidyā*. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* says: "*Avidyāyāmantare vartamānāḥ svayaṃ dhīrāḥ paṇḍit-anmanyamānāḥ* . . ." (Those who consider themselves to be steadfast and learned even while being under the influence of *avidyā* . . . Kaṭha. Up. 1.2.5.) According to the Advaitin, this Upaniṣadic text speaks of the existence of positive *avidyā / ajñāna*. The Nimbārkist, however argues that this text of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* does not indicate any positive *ajñāna*. In his opinion, the word, *avidyā*, in this context is indicative, not of *avidyā*, but of *karman*. The text, thus, intends to say, the Nimbārkist contends: 'Those who consider themselves to be steadfast and learned even while being engaged in actions associated with desire . . .' That the word, '*avidyā*', in the Kaṭha Upaniṣadic text, really stands far *karman*, is evident from the fact that both the *Iśa Upaniṣad* and the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* speak of *avidyā* as *karman*. For example, the *Iśa Upaniṣad* says: "*Avidyayā mṛtyuṃ tīrtvā vidyayā' mṛtamaśnute*." (Iśa. Up. 11.) This text, the Nimbārkist argues, expresses the idea: "By crossing death through the performance of *karman* (which is different from knowledge), one attains liberation with the help of proper knowledge." The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* also speaks of *avidyā* as the third power of Viṣṇu, which is really designated as *karman*. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* thus states: "*Avidyā karmasaṃjñānyā tṛtīyā śaktiriṣyate*." ["*Avidyā*, designated as *karma* is the intended third power."] (*Viṣṇupurāṇa*, 6.7.71.)

Notes & References

1. See Śaṃkarācārya's commentary on B.S. 1.1.

2. "*Āropyāsiddhyāpi adhyāsāsiddhiḥ, yatyadāropitaṃ tat-tat sapradhānaṃ dṛṣṭaṃ śuktirūpyādivat, yannaivaṃ tannaivaṃ śaśaśṛṅgavat — ityanvaya-vyatirekavyāpteḥ sarvavādi-sammatavāt* ". Parapakṣa, p. 88.

3. "*Prathmādhyāse smaryamānasyaiva śaśaśṛṅgāyamānatvāt kutastatsādṛśya-sambhāvanāpi*". Parapakṣa, p. 118.

4. "*Pūrvapūrvādhyās-opadarśitasya dehādeḥ saṃskārarūpeṇa sthitasyottarotta-rādhyāsahetutvāt. Na ca dehāderavastutvādanāropa iti vācyam. Pratītimātreṇā-ropyatva-siddhau vastusattāyā aprayojakatvāt*". *Vivaraṇaprameya-saṃgraha*. Part I, p. 107.

5. "*Na cārope tadviṣayaka-pratīti-mātram-evāpkṣitaṃ, natu tadviṣayasya satyatvampīti vācyaṃ. Asaṭaḥ pratītirevāsambhavāt*". Parapakṣa, p. 91.

6. "*Na ca rajjau sarpapratīteriva pṛapañca-pratīterapi doṣamātrameva kāraṇaṃ-apekṣitam. . . . . kutrāpi asataḥ kāraṇatvāsambhavācca*". Parapakṣa, pp. 91-2.

7. "*Na cāsato'pi sarpasya bhayakampādi-kāryadarśanāt kāryasya kāraṇa-sattā- sāpekṣatvaniyame vyabhicāra iti vācyaṃ, svarupeṇāsataḥ kāryotpatty-anukula-śaktimattva-lakṣaṇa-kāraṇatvāsambhavāt*". Parapakṣa, p. 92.

8. "*Bhramasthale'pi kalpita-sarpa-viṣayaka-jñānasyaiva bhayādi-hetutvaṃ, na viṣayasye-ti sarpajñānābhāva-vato bālasya satya-sarpa-darśane'pi bhayādyadarśanāt*". Parapakṣa, p. 92.

9. "*Tatra saṃskārasyānāditve adhiṣṭāna–samasattākatvena tasya tāttvikatāpatter-durvāratvam.*" Parapakṣa, pp. 93-4.

10. "*Na ca svenādhyasta eva svāropa-heturiti vācyam, bhramāt pūrvaṃ svasya kāryānumeya-saṃskārasya adhyastatvā-bhāvena adhyāsa-kāraṇatvā-sambhavāt. Na ca saṃskāro'jñāto vyavahārikaḥ svenāropitaḥ svādhyāsaheturastyeveti vācyam. Ajñātasyā-dhystatve mānābhāvena pāramārthikatva-prasaṅgāt*". Parapakṣa, p. 94.

11. "*Kiñca ko vā saṃskārāśrayaḥ, śuddhaṃ brahma vā jīvo vā? Nādyaḥ śuddhatva-bhaṅgāt. Na dvitīyaḥ, tasyādhyāsakāryatveno-ttarabhāvitvāt.*" Parapakṣa, p. 94.

12. See p.196.

13. "*Kiñca smaryamānārope sādṛśya-jñānasyāpi hetutvāt, prakṛte tu nirviśeṣasyā-dhiṣṭhānasya sādṛśyābhāvāt katham adhyāsaḥ*? Parapakṣa, p. 94.

14. "*Na ca 'pītaḥ śankhaḥ' iti sādṛśyaṃ vināpi bhramaḥ pratīyata iti vācyam. Dravyatvādinā tatrāpi sādṛśyadhiyaḥ sattvāt.*" Parapakṣa, p. 95.

15. "*Phalānumeyasyā-jñātasyā-dṛṣṭasya āropāt prāk sattve mānābhāvāt.*" Parapakṣa, pp. 91-2.

16. "*Adhiṣṭhānaṃ hi sāmāneyena gṛhītaṃ viśeṣenāgṛhītātmā.*" *Vivaraṇaprameya-saṃgraha,* Part II, p. 23.

17. "*Nanu svarūpeṇa jñātatve sati viśeṣeṇā-jñātatvasyādhiṣṭhānatve prayojakatayā . . . svarūpeṇa jñātāt purṇānandatvādinā-jñātād-adhiṣṭhānatvaṃ sūpapannamiti cenna, svarūpato jñātasya nirviśeṣaya viśeṣenā-jñātatvāsambhavāt.*" Parapakṣa, pp. 84-5.

18. "*Yadapyuktaṃ samprayogo nāmātrā-dhiṣṭhāna-sāmānyajñānameva tadapyasamyak, nirviśeṣeśe sāmānya-viśeṣatvābhāvāt. Kalpita-sāmānyādi-dharmasya adhyāsa-janyatvena tadānīmabhāvāt.*" Parapakṣa, p. 118. See also *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā*, p. 25.

19. "*Svaprakāśatvādyāropaṃ prati svaprakāśatvādyantarasya prayojakatve anavasthā-prasaṅgācca, pūrvapūrvājñānakalpitaṃ brahma uttarottarājñānāśrayo viṣayaśceti brahmaṇo'pi kalpitatvānityatvādiprasaṅgācca.*" Parapakṣa, p. 87.

20. *Na ca bhrama-virodhi-jñānābhāvastatra tantraṃ natu viśeṣājñānaṃ. Avacchedaka-dharma-darśanādeḥ vyāvṛttākārasyaiva bhrama-virodhitvāt. Na hi vādhakadhī-viṣayo bhrama-kāle ajñāto dharmo brahmaṇi tavāsti, tatrāsadviśeṣajñānā-bhāvasya vādha-kāle'pi sattvāt.*" Parapakṣa, pp. 87-8.

21. "*Adhyāsamātrasya doṣa-janyatva-darśanāt avidyādhyāsasyāpi anāditvā-sambhavāt. Kiñca yatrādhyāsatvaṃ tatra sāditvaṃ śuktirupyādivat. Yatrānāditvaṃ tatra nādhyāsa-tvamātmavat-ityanvayavyatireka-vyāptivadanādyadhyāse vyāptyadarśanāt.*" Parapakṣa, p. 98.

22. "*Api ca purovartini indriya-saṃyukte eva viṣaye . . . anyonyāśrayatvāpatteḥ. Na cānāditvān-nokta-doṣa iti vācyaṃ mānābhāvādityarthaḥ.*" Parapakṣa, pp. 97-8.

23. *Śrutyantakalpavallī*, Śrīpuruṣottamaprasāda, pp. 69-71. Chowkhamba edition, Kashi, 1927.

24. "*Ahamartho mokṣānvayī tat-sādhana-kṛtyāśrayatvāt sammatavat.*" Parapakṣa, p. 365.

25. "*Anātmatvaṃ nāhamarthavṛtti anātma-mātra-vṛttitvāt, ghaṭatvādivat.*" Parapakṣa, p. 366.

26. See p. 39.

27. Parapakṣa, p. 345. "*Suṣuptāvapyaham-ityevā-tmāvabhāsa-prasaṅgāt. Na caivamasti. Tato nāhaṃkāra ātmā suṣuptāvanabhāsāt.*" *Viyaraṇaprameyasaṃgraha*, part II. p. 75.

28. Parapakṣa, p. 358.

29. "*Anāditve sati bhāvarūpaṃ vijñānanirasyamāna-majñānam.*" *Tattvapradīpikā*, p. 51. Ed. Kashinath Shāstri, Bombay, 1913.

30. See pp. 112-13.

31. See pp. 162-170.

32. Parapakṣa, pp. 135-8. *Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā*, commentary on *sūtra* 1.1.1.

33. *Tattvapradīpikā*, p. 60.

34. See pp. 156-70

35. Parapakṣa, pp. 138-40.

36. Parapakṣa, p. 142.

37. Parapakṣa, p. 142.

38. According to Maṇḍana Miśra and Vācaspati Miśra, *jīva* is the locus of *ajñāna*.

39. Parapakṣa, p. 144.

40. *Śṛutyantakalpavallī*, Benaras edition, pp. 116-17. *Vedāntatattvabodha*, Anantarāma, Vrindaban edition, pp. 45-50.

41. *Śrutyantakalpavallī*, Benaras edition, pp. 55-6. *Vedāntatattvabodha*, Anantarāma, Vrindaban edition, pp. 48-9.

42. Parapakṣa, p. 144.

43. The expression, '*vimataṃ pramājñānam*' literally means that *pramājñāna* is the subject (*pakṣa*) of which the probandum (*sādhya*) is to be proved. It also means, 'the disputed *pramājñāna*'.

44. *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṃgraha*, Part I, p. 133.

45. 'Something else' here stands for *ajñāna*.

46. According to Advaita Vedānta, in all knowledge there is present the self-shinning transcendent light of consciousness which imparts to its object the character of immediacy. Consciousness in this aspect is called the *sākṣin*, the witness. This is so called because it is conceived as the impartial spectator which takes no part in the ever-changing process of knowledge, but only lights it up or passively witnesses it. However individualised, finite the consciousness may appear to be, yet it retains it transcendence. See *Six Ways of Knowing*, D.M. Datta, p. 81.

47. Parapakṣa, pp. 148-9.

48. Parapakṣa, p. 151.

49. Parapakṣa, pp. 154-5.

50. *Ajñānanivartakatva* is implied by the word, '*svanivartya*' in the inference.

51. I. e. in a *pramājñāna*. *Pramājñāna* is preceded by *ajñāna*.

52. Parapakṣa, pp. 156-8.

53. See p. 211.

54. Parapakṣa, pp. 161-2.

55. *Ṛgvda*, X. 90,3.

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Kauṣitakī Upaniṣad

Kena Upaniṣad

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad

Praśna Upaniṣad

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad

Taittirīya Upaniṣad

Vedānta

Brahmasūtra And Commentaries On It

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Baladeva Upādhyāya	*Govindabhāṣya* (commentary on *Brahma-sūtra*), Mathura, samvat 2011. Edited and translated into English, *Govindabhāsya,* B.D. Basu, Allahabad, 1912.
Bhāskarācārya	*Brahmāsūtrabhāṣya* ed. V.P. Dwivedi, Choukhamba, Sanskrit Series.
Nimbārkācārya	*Vedāntapārijāta-saurabha* (commentary on *Brahmasūtra*), (i) Ed. Vindhyesvari Prasad Dwivedi, Choukhamba Sanskrit Series, Benaras, 1917. (ii) Ed. Dhundiraj Shastri, Benaras, 1932. (iii) Quoted by Swami Dhananjaydas in *Srinimbarkacharya, Tanhar Darshanik Matabad O Sadhanapranali*, Part I, Kathia Babar Asram, Sukhchar, West Bengal.

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ABBREVIATIONS

B.S.	*Brahmasūtra*
Bṛhad. Up	*Bṛha-dāraṇaka Upaniṣad*
Chānd. Up.	*Chāndo ..ya Upaniṣad*
Īśa. Up.	*Īśa Upaniṣad*
Kaṭha Up.	*Kaṭha Upaniṣad*
Mund. Up.	*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*
Parapakṣa Up.	*Adhyāsaparapakṣagirivajram*
Śvet. Up.	*Śvetaśvatara Upaniṣad*
Tait. Up.	*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*
Ved. kaus. bhā	*Vedāntakaustubha-bhāṣya*
Ved. pār.saurabha	*Vedaṇṭapārijāta-saurabha*
Vivaraṇa	*Vivaraṇaprameya-saṃgraha*

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Errata

Page 11 line 7	*dvāvajāvīśānīśau* instead of *dvāvajāviśanišau*
Page 11 line 19	omit first bracket (“)”) at end of line
Page 12 line 7	*Chāndogya* instead of *Chāndaga*
Page 12 line 10	Śrīkṛṣṇa instead of Śrikṛṣṇa
Page 18 line 17	insert first bracket after 28
Page 32 line 1	*acintya* instead of *acinty*
Page 33 note 55	‘*viśiṣṭavaiśiṣṭya* instead of ‘viśiṣṭavaiśiṣṭa’
Page 48 line 3	both of the essence of knowledge instead of both knowledge
Page 53 line 4	*satyaṃjñānam-* instead of *satyaṃj-ñanam-*
Page 55 line 10	they ask instead of he asks
Page 62 line 13	insert question mark (?) after *Kathaṃ*
Page 70 line 25	*manasā* instead of *manosā*
Page 77 line 2	*prāṇamaya* instead of *prāṇmaya*
Page 77 line 26	*Jyotirdarśanāt* instead of *Jyotirdarśannāt*
Page 80 line 6	*jagatātīta* instead of *jagadātīta*
Page 81 line 15	Bṛhad Instead of Bṛahad

Page 101 line 2	*svarūpalakṣaṇantu* instead of *svarūpalakṣaṇatu*
Page 103 note 62	made of instead of mode of
Page 110 line 24	Bṛhad. Up. instead of Br. Up.
Page 151 note 39 line 3	*sattāviṣayikā* instead of *sattaviṣayikā*
Page 155 line 25	His instead of his
Page 158 line 25	and instead of nad
Page 166 line 8	Chānd. Up. 6.14 instead of Chānd. Up. 6.1.14
Page 184 line 18	Bṛhad. Up.4.4.19 instead of Kaṭha. Up. 2.6.9
Page 237 line 7	Brahmasūtra insead of Brahmā-sūtra
Page 239 line 5	Vrindaban instead of Virndaban
Page 241	towards end *Brahmabadi* instead of *Brahmabdi*

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